

## **Resolution in Support of Eliminating the Senate Filibuster**

**WHEREAS** The authors of the United States Constitution intended legislation to be passed by simple majority vote, and the Constitution mandates supermajority votes in only a few specific cases; and

**WHEREAS** Senator John Calhoun and Southern Senators began to use the Senate filibuster successfully to preserve slavery prior to the Civil War and then to block voting rights for Black citizens during Reconstruction; and

**WHEREAS** While Senate filibuster was used rarely for the 87 years between when Reconstruction ended until 1964, and the only category of legislation against which the filibuster was employed to actively stop bills in their tracks was Civil Rights legislation”, including 200 bills outlawing lynching, bills ending poll taxes and employment discrimination, and the Civil Rights Acts of 1957 and 1964; and

**WHEREAS** The use of the filibuster has skyrocketed since the 1970’s and in recent years been used to block progressive legislation, including bills on worker rights, lobbying reform, voting rights and election reform, wage discrimination, a public option for healthcare, consumer protection, banking regulations, Social Security benefits, the DREAM Act, climate change legislation, and gun violence prevention in the wake of the Sandyhook mass shooting; and

**WHEREAS** The Senate filibuster rule has created a de facto supermajority requirement to pass any legislation; and

**WHEREAS** The filibuster has for several decades allowed Republicans to set the legislative agenda even when not in control of the Senate and despite representing a minority of the population of the United States; and

**WHEREAS** The U.S. House of Representatives has passed H.R. 1, The For the People Act, which would expand voting access, reduce the influence of big money in elections, and reverse the Republican Party’s assault on voting rights in many states; and

**WHEREAS** The U.S. House of Representatives has passed H.R. 5, The Equality Act, which would prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex, gender identity, and sexual orientation; and

**WHEREAS** Discussions are underway regarding a New Civil Rights Act; and

**WHEREAS** The above legislation, along with many others benefiting the American people and creating a more just society will likely be blocked by the requirement to achieve a 60-vote supermajority to end not just a filibuster but to overcome even just the threat of a filibuster despite Democrat control of the U.S. House, Senate, and Presidency; and

**WHEREAS** Abolishing the filibuster will benefit a Democratic and progressive legislative agenda that will improve and strengthen the United States; and

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the 10<sup>th</sup> Legislative District Democrats support the elimination of the Senate filibuster, including by using the so-called “nuclear option” if necessary; and,

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the 10<sup>th</sup> Legislative District Democrats call on Senators Murray and Cantwell to make a public statement in support of ending the Senate filibuster, and to sponsor, support, and actively work to end the Senate filibuster in 2021 and pass the aforementioned legislation; and,

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED** that a copy of this resolution be submitted to Washington State Senators Patty Murray and Maria Cantwell, Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer, Washington State Representative Rick Larsen, Suzan DelBene, and members of the media.

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Submitted by Bob Wolters, 10<sup>th</sup> LD Democrats member, John Amell, Chair, 10<sup>th</sup> LD Democrats,