

1                   **Endorse and Support the Passage of Initiative**  
2                   **Measure No. 502 to Legalize, Tax, and Regulate**  
3                   **Marijuana for Adults 21 and Over**  
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5   **WHEREAS** thousands of Washington adults are arrested, prosecuted, and convicted for  
6   simple marijuana possession each year, wasting millions of dollars in police, court, and  
7   jail resources that could be redirected to more important public safety priorities;

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9   **WHEREAS** marijuana is Washington’s second biggest cash crop and could generate  
10   hundreds of millions of dollars in new tax revenues for the state if brought out of the  
11   illicit market, regulated, produced by licensed Washington businesses, and taxed;

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13   **WHEREAS** legalizing marijuana and bringing it under regulatory control would have a  
14   significant impact on the illicit profits supporting violent criminal organizations;

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16   **WHEREAS** simple marijuana possession charges now account for fully half of all drug  
17   arrests in Washington;

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19   **WHEREAS** possession of even a small amount of marijuana for personal use is a  
20   criminal charge requiring court appearances and carrying a mandatory minimum  
21   sentence of twenty-four hours in jail and a \$250 fine, plus court costs and attorneys’  
22   fees;

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24   **WHEREAS** these short-term consequences disrupt lives and create financial hardship  
25   for many;

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27   **WHEREAS** even a misdemeanor conviction for marijuana possession can result in long-  
28   term consequences like loss of employment, loss of housing, loss of federal financial aid  
29   for college, termination of child visitation rights, and deportation and exclusion of legal  
30   immigrants;

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32   **WHEREAS** although white Washingtonians use marijuana at slightly higher rates,  
33   people of color are more frequently arrested, charged, and convicted for marijuana  
34   possession, resulting in a disproportionate impact on the communities struggling most  
35   to achieve social and economic justice;

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37   **WHEREAS** in Washington, an African American is three times as likely to be arrested,  
38   three times as likely to be charged, and three times as likely to be convicted for a  
39   marijuana offense as a white Washingtonian, despite the fact that whites use marijuana  
40   at slightly higher rates;

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42 **WHEREAS** evidence-based prevention programs, community support for at-risk  
43 families, education, and healthcare are more cost-effective strategies for reducing the  
44 risk of substance abuse than incarcerating people for marijuana use and saddling them  
45 with criminal records;

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47 **WHEREAS** Initiative Measure No. 502 will legalize, tax, and regulate the purchase and  
48 possession of small amounts of marijuana for adults aged 21 and over;

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50 **WHEREAS** Initiative Measure No. 502 will authorize the Washington State Liquor  
51 Control Board to license private individuals to produce, refine, and sell marijuana in  
52 marijuana-only stores, and to adopt regulations addressing safety, security, sanitation,  
53 quality control, labeling, and advertising;

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55 **WHEREAS** Initiative Measure No. 502 will generate an estimated \$215 million in new  
56 tax revenues each year, with roughly \$80 million going to the state general fund and  
57 local budgets, and \$135 million earmarked for substance abuse prevention, research and  
58 education, healthcare, and programs for at-risk youth;

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60 **WHEREAS** Initiative Measure No. 502 will create a per se DUI threshold of 5  
61 nanograms per milliliter of whole blood for the psychoactive marijuana component  
62 THC, and this per se limit will not apply to the non-psychoactive marijuana metabolite  
63 carboxy-THC that can appear in blood and urine tests for days or even weeks after last  
64 use; and

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66 **WHEREAS** Initiative Measure No. 502 will not change Washington's medical marijuana  
67 law, but it will provide patients new protection from arrest for possessing marijuana  
68 and new access to licensed, regulated sources of quality-controlled and Washington-  
69 produced marijuana;

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71 **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that we, the Washington State Democratic Central  
72 Committee, endorse and stand in support of Initiative Measure No. 502 to legalize, tax,  
73 and regulate marijuana for adults 21 and over.

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76 Submitted by the 30<sup>th</sup> Legislative District Democrats to the Washington State  
77 Democratic Central Committee for consideration at its September 17, 2011 meeting in  
78 Bellingham. (Date Submitted 9/8/2011)

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80 Submitted by the 39<sup>th</sup> Legislative District Democrats to the Washington State  
81 Democratic Central Committee for consideration at its September 17, 2011 meeting in  
82 Bellingham. (Date Submitted 9/8/2011)