

A Resolution of the Washington County Democrats Central Committee
WCDCC Resolution # 2020-008
Regarding Support for Metro May Ballot Measure to Combat Homelessness to
appear on the May 19, 2020 Ballot

Measure Summary

Supports a Metro ballot initiative to add a 10-year, 1% income tax and 1% business profit tax on higher income individuals and businesses for the purposes of dramatically reducing homelessness in the region. The initiative would appear on the May ballot. Funds would pass-through to the counties for distribution to existing regional agencies

A. WHEREAS, the greater Portland region is facing a severe housing affordability and homelessness crisis, which endangers the health and safety of thousands of our neighbors: Homelessness is a deeply traumatic and dehumanizing experience that no person should have to endure, and

B. WHEREAS 4460 people in Washington Count are experiencing homelessness or at risk of becoming homeless and 9% of Washington County residents live below the federal poverty level, and

C WHEREAS, tens of thousands of households in the greater Portland region need supportive housing services, and thousands more need housing assistance, according to the February 2020 ECONorthwest report entitled “Potential Sources and Uses of Revenue to Address the Region’s Homeless Crisis”, and

D. WHEREAS, the homelessness crisis is an issue of scale and services do not yet match the scope of the crisis, and additional revenue is required to scale services to meet the needs and scope of the crisis; and

E. WHEREAS, Metro Council intends to refer to the voters, in the May Primary, a measure that would approve of the imposition of a personal income tax and business profits tax to fund homeless prevention, supportive housing, rent assistance and other services that stabilize people experiencing homelessness and housing instability; and Metro will work with local government partners, service providers, and other stakeholders to create a regional program to this end, and

F. WHEREAS the proposed 1% tax would be limited to persons with taxable income over \$200,000 if filing jointly and \$125,000 if filing singly, and the proposed business tax would only be levied on net profits for businesses with more than \$5 million in gross receipts, both taxes to sunset in 10 years, and

G. Whereas the proposed measure is predicted to generate approximately \$248 million in annual revenues which could provide approximately 5000 chronically homeless with housing and wraparound services plus housing voucher assistance for an additional 20,000 families in danger of homelessness, and

H. WHEREAS distribution of funds from the proposed tax levy will be to the three counties based on current populations and updated when new census data are available:

THEREFORE, THE WASHINGTON COUNTY DEMOCRATIC CENTRAL COMMITTEE resolves as follows:

1. We agree with Metro and the leaders of Clackamas, Multnomah, and Washington Counties that homelessness is a regional problem that demands immediate attention.
2. We support the proposed personal income and business tax of 1%, referred to as the Supportive Housing Services Ballot Measure, as will be presented as a ballot measure in the May Primary for the Metro region, and will encourage our members to support this tax.
3. We will place our endorsement of this measure on slate cards to be distributed by our Neighborhood Leaders.

Draft Resolution submitted by R&PC Chair, G.Rosenthal, February 25, 2020; Approved with amendments (in italics) and requested as "Emergency" consideration, R&PC Meeting, March 3, 2020. Approved WCDCC E-Board Special Session March 11, 2020 due to cancellation of CC due to pandemic.

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