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2 **Resolution to Protect Farmers from Loss and Liability**

3 **Due to the Drift of Genetically Engineered Material**

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5 WHEREAS genetically engineered (GE) plants will foreseeably and have been known to disperse into
6 the environment through pollen drift, seed commingling, and inadvertent transfer of seeds by humans,
7 animals, vehicles, farm equipment, and weather events; and

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9 WHEREAS courts have found that genetic drift of GE material can restrict the freedom of farmers to
10 grow agricultural crops for organic and non-GE markets or for export markets that prohibit or restrict
11 products contaminated by GE material;

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13 WHEREAS contamination by GE material of non-GE agricultural crops can create economic losses
14 for the affected producers; and

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16 WHEREAS the liability for the transfer of GE material is currently passed from manufacturers of GE
17 plants to farmers and other property owners; and

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19 WHEREAS farmers have been searched and sued by manufacturers and patent holders of GE crops for
20 saving their own seed because the seed contains patented genetics; and

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22 WHEREAS contamination of the food and feed supply due to the production of food and feed crops
23 containing human and animal pharmaceutical drugs and biologics designed to be biologically active in
24 humans and animals, can impact public health, damage the seed supply, and cause economic loss for
25 non-GE growers; and

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27 WHEREAS innocent farmers, farm businesses, and other property owners deserve to be shielded from
28 legal and financial liabilities for the presence of GE material in their crops that occurred without their
29 knowledge and is beyond their control,

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31 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that we, the Washington State Democratic Central Committee
32 (WSDCC) urge our legislators to sponsor legislation that will protect organic and non-GE farmers
33 from liability and economic losses resulting from the drift of genetically engineered material, and

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35 THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we, the WSDCC, urge our legislators to ensure
36 that the State of Washington retains the authority and capacity to adequately monitor and document
37 the planting of genetically engineered material in order to protect the agricultural economy, including
38 the interests of non-GMO participants therein, and to mediate and enforce the law when necessary

39 between manufacturers and farmers,

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41 THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we, the WSDCC, urge our legislators to sponsor
42 legislation to maintain sufficient knowledge of the presence of GE material in the State of Washington
43 and to institute requirements that growers of GE crops provide adequate buffers from non-GE crops
44 when necessary to preserve the economic freedom of farmers to grow agricultural crops for organic
45 and non-GE markets or for export markets that prohibit or restrict products contaminated by GE
46 material.

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48 Submitted by the Jefferson County Democrats for consideration by the WSDCC at its January 2010
49 meeting in Seattle. (Date submitted December 8, 2009; ARC (Agriculture and Rural Caucus) signed
50 on as a Co-Sponsor of Resolution (Date submitted, January 5, 2010)

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