

# KCDCC 2008 Caucus/Convention—Fact Finding Team Review

## — Values Statement

### Business Case

Collect and tabulate the expense/income/net, number of locations, and number of attendees from all levels of the cycle: precinct, legislative district, and county.

### 2008 Washington State - Caucus/ Convention Balance Sheet

Submitted by: \_\_\_\_\_ for

(in dollars)

Description	Precinct Caucuses	Legislative District Caucus	County Convention
Donations:			
Contribution-in-Kind			
Door Donations			
Door Prizes			
Merchandise			
Refreshments			
Other			
<b>Total Donations:</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>
Expense:			
Location(s) Rental			
Official Call Printing			
Planning/Prep Meetings			
Refreshments			
Supplies			
USPS (Postage)			
Other			
<b>Total Expense</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>
<b>Net (Donation-Expense)</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>

How Many Locations for  
Precinct Caucuses?

How Many Attendees

Issues

# KCDCC 2008 Caucus/Convention—Fact Finding Team Review

## — Values Statement

### Presidential Nominee Selection Process Values

1. The purpose of the process is selecting a presidential nominee. The importance of getting this right means that all other considerations dwarf in comparison. The importance to the country and the world are undeniable. The importance to the party is that if we get the right candidates, volunteers and money will follow. If we don't the party will, and should wither and die.
2. Other functions like party building and fund raising must be seen as secondary to the primary function of selecting a nominee. If two processes are seen as equally valid these secondary functions may be used as a tie breaker.
3. What makes the best process is getting thoughtful participation from a broad spectrum of voters who share Democratic values. Note that there is an inherent conflict in this statement. If participation is narrowed too much, the party is at risk of nominating a candidate who does not appeal to the mainstream electorate. However, if participation is broadened too much there is a risk of less than thoughtful participation and the inclusion of voters who do not share Democratic values. Every process that I know of tries to find a balance between these two goals, and none are perfect.
4. Another key feature of a good process is that it must be viewed as valid by the general electorate. While people who quote a constitutional right to primary participation are mistaken, nonetheless resentment towards the process will damage our candidates at the polls.
5. Similarly, the process must be viewed as valid by party members. Party divisions are damaging to both short term and long term party goals.
6. The current election cycle has shown that the process is fundamentally broken. It is broken in both parties. It is broken at the state and federal levels. Saying that this year is an exception is no relief. Any process will work if there is only one candidate, or if one stands clearly above the others. A year like this is when it has to work.
7. In theory, both the caucus and primary system have much to recommend themselves. The key problem exposed in the caucus process this year has to do with variability. Iowa deals well with its caucuses because they know from cycle to cycle that participation will be high and they can plan for it. Washington, on the other hand, must make plans for facilities and infrastructure months before the level of participation is clear. Guess too low, and we are overwhelmed by too many voters crammed into too little space. Guess too high and we are on the hook for thousands of dollars in facility fees with insufficient revenues to cover them.
8. Finally, any solution we pick will be a balancing act. None will be perfect. All will have problems. What we need to do is make sure, as best we can, that the process will work in all years, but especially one like this.

Bryan Kesterson,  
Research Delegate Selection Plans Subcommittee Chair

See separate document—research on other state parties by Bryan.,

# *KCDCC 2008 Caucus/Convention—Fact Finding Team Review*

## **— Values Statement**

### **Infrastructure and Technology Subcommittee**

To ensure that the Democratic Party, campaigns and registered voting population is properly served, there is great value in putting the proper infrastructure and technology in place by November 2011 to support the caucus/convention cycle for 2012.

Infrastructure includes:

- Online Caucus Lookup and Pre-Registration Application
- Fully staffed, trained, help support desk (hours from 7:00 am to 10:00 pm)
  - New bank of phone lines that does not come through switchboard
  - 20-30 employees on staggered shifts to support coverage above
- Data base application that can be used by help desk (and others) that has been designed, developed and fully tested (system, alpha, beta, and third party). (Perhaps, this is a more sophisticated version of VoteBuilder)
- More trained technology support personnel — a staff of six to twelve, educated and trained in data base applications
- Training available to all (instructor-based and online) — easily accessible)
- Revised website capabilities
- Include all of the above in budget

Technology includes:

- Use state-of-the-art tools and techniques — the best of the best!
- Ensure that the lowest level hardware/software is supported as well as the high-end tools
- Ease of use for the lowest level of users
- Educated and trained employees who understand the process and the system
- Include hardware/software and employee resources in budget

If we are to move forward in 2012 and present an improved process, we must make the commitments now to invest the time, money, and energy in the upgrade of the Washington State Democratic Party—Infrastructure and Technology for the good of the Party and the People. It's all in the preparation!

Susan C. Sheary,  
Infrastructure and Technology Subcommittee Chair

# KCDCC 2008 Caucus/Convention—Fact Finding Team Review

## — Values Statement

### **Relationship between the Democratic Party organization and Presidential Campaigns**

**Value #1: The caucus system is fundamentally undemocratic.** Some would argue that the Democratic Party is not a democracy but rather a private organization. Therefore, we are not required to allow anyone with an opinion to participate in choosing our presidential nominee. While this is an accurate statement, shouldn't we as "the party of the people" strive for maximum inclusion? There is a widely held belief that people who attend the caucuses "care more" about the party and the issues we stand for. This is a fundamentally incorrect assumption. For example, improving health care is, or at least should be, one of the top priorities for the party and its presidential nominee. Doctors, nurses, and other healthcare providers who have to work during the time of the caucus are systematically disenfranchised. *We should aim to increase participation by using the primary for delegate apportionment.* This would also ensure that only properly registered voters can participate in the nomination process. In the 2008 caucuses, there were not enough resources to ensure participants were registered voters.

**Value #2: Party building does not have to rely on holding caucuses.** The major argument in favor of the caucuses is that they foster party building and fundraising. Party leaders are given access to names and contact information that allows them to tap potential volunteers and donors. This seems a lot like "the ends justify the means" rationale. *We should strongly consider pushing for party registration in the state of Washington.* Party registration would generate the same lists of names and contact information, thereby eliminating the dependency on caucuses for this purpose. Also, developing a more positive relationship with the campaigns would allow the Democrats the same opportunity to gather this information. For example, the campaigns could share their lists of names and contact information with the Democrats at the end of the campaign season. Many people will say that this cannot happen and it has never been done before. But isn't this election supposed to be about "change", not just for the country but also for the party?

Sharon Paige  
Relationship to Campaigns Subcommittee Chair

# *KCDCC 2008 Caucus/Convention—Fact Finding Team Review*

## **— Values Statement**

### **Caucus/Convention Rules**

Before rules can be addressed, we must establish a process. Other considerations include knowing who the Chair of the 2012 Rules committee will be and who will populate the committee. We must establish good working relationships with all members.

Please see separate document, "MS Word Document, Precinct and Legislative District Rules,"

as edited by Sharon Mast and Hank Thomas,  
Co-Chairs of Caucus/Convention Rules Subcommittee

# KCDCC 2008 Caucus/Convention—Fact Finding Team Review

## — Values Statement

### **Plan for Platform and Resolutions**

#### Guiding Principles

- A platform establishes/describes “core principles”
  - Differentiates us from other parties, especially Republicans; answers the question, “How do you know you are a Democrat?”
  - A transparent grassroots process is needed for the platform to be credible.
  - Very substantial support at each level (local, county, state) is needed for planks to be included as part of the platform, after committee recommendations.
- A platform should provide the place on which candidates can stand and run

#### Platform Recommendations

- Standardize platform and resolutions processes at state level, including formats
  - Use President’s Day 2010 to offer training and tools about platform/resolutions process.
  - Do not hold precinct caucuses in 2010 (off-years); instead hold well publicized issues hearings at LD/County level and write/update platforms
  - Present updated platform drafts at issues hearings to move discussions forward
  - The primary purpose of the county convention is the platform. While the state convention takes care of broader business, it needs to reduce time spent on non-productive activities so that the platform has adequate time for consideration.
  - Use web tools and cutoff dates at each level to post drafts and invite comments, with WSD support.
  - LD platforms should be supported. They make a major contribution to the development of platforms at higher levels and provide a point of access for the grassroots; a local issues section is valuable.
  - Hold platform hearings concurrent with LD caucus/convention registration for final input; committee can then accept or reject comments
  - With hearings and access to the committee, there should be no amendments from the floor; only up or down votes on each disputed plank.
  - Communicate process and product to delegates and candidates.
  - Report back to the county/LD to show what they got for their participation and encourage continued engagement.
  - The platform process needs to be in the script and packet for the 2012 caucus.
  - The process should be well-described before and during convention (cover sheet)
- Every delegate present should have a printed copy of the platform and resolutions

—continued on next page

# *KCDCC 2008 Caucus/Convention—Fact Finding Team Review*

## **— Values Statement**

### **Plan for Platform and Resolutions (Continued)**

#### Resolutions Recommendations

- Resolutions should deal with specific, urgent issues that will be moot by the time of the platform revision (2 years) and are not in the platform.
- Resolutions should follow a standard format and be limited to one page in length.
- Resolutions should be limited in number and prioritized. (e.g., top 10)
- Resolutions at State Convention should prioritize (1) party business and (2) elections; issues of immediate urgency may be considered; others could be deferred to the next WSDCC meeting

Adopted resolutions should be retained by LD or County in a state database

Sarajane Siegfriedt

Chair of Plan for Platform and Resolutions Subcommittee

# *KCDCC 2008 Caucus/Convention—Fact Finding Team Review*

## **— Values Statement**

### **People—Participation—Perceptions**

—still in work

Some of the thoughts are: Disenfranchisement versus meeting face-to-face versus building identity.

Absentee Ballots

Provisional Ballots

Tuesday versus Saturday

Shannon deRubens

Chair of People—Participation—Perceptions Subcommittee