

Resolution Banning Donations from Private Prison Companies

WHEREAS the private prison industry in the United States is a multi-billion dollar industry involving about 400 companies; and

WHEREAS private prison corporations enter into contracts with municipalities and the federal government with guarantees that they will receive a minimum “supply” of human prisoners; and

WHEREAS governmental “must-supply” contracts with private prisons lead to excessive levels of incarceration for low-level crimes; and

WHEREAS for-profit prisons are not subject to the same oversight that government-run jails and prisons are, and meet profit goals through negligence towards prisoners and maintaining substandard living conditions; and

WHEREAS the industry spent \$1.6 million lobbying, donating to candidates, and funding super-PACs in 2016, mostly to Republicans, and is on pace to spend over a million in 2018; and

WHEREAS the Immigrations and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agency alone spends more than \$2 billion a year on immigrant detention through private jails; and

WHEREAS there is evidence that the Trump Administration’s unjust immigration policies, as well as previous unjust laws like Arizona’s “papers please” law, are driven in part by the profit motive of its private prison donors; and

WHEREAS large private prison firms, which reorganized as real estate trusts, have received preferential tax windfalls from the 2017 Republican tax bill; and

WHEREAS the Obama administration in 2016 announced it was ending incarceration of federal prisons in private facilities (but not immigration detainees), and both 2016 Democratic candidates Bernie Sanders and Hillary Clinton have called for an end to private incarceration;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Snohomish County Democrats call for the abolition of private, for-profit incarceration in the United States; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Snohomish County Democrats will not accept donations from companies in the for-profit prison industry; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Snohomish County Democrats call upon the DNC, DCCC, DSCC, and other Democratic-aligned organizations to reject donations from the for-profit prison industry; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Snohomish County Democrats provide a copy of this resolution to the DNC, DCCC, DSCC, and Democratic candidates within Washington state.

Submitted by Jason Call, Snohomish County state committee member.

References

<https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2017/dec/28/private-prisons-investors-trump-tax-bill>

<https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2016/aug/18/us-government-private-prisons-use-justice-department>

https://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/hillary-clinton-private-prisons_us_562a3e3ee4b0ec0a389418ec

<https://www.opensecrets.org/industries./indus.php?ind=G7000>