



Orange County Democratic Party 2021 Resolutions Omnibus Package

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Table of Contents ([Resolutions numbered in order of consideration](#))

CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM

1. IN SUPPORT OF H.R. 403, TRANSPARENCY IN CORPORATE POLITICAL SPENDING ACT

CONSUMER RIGHTS

2. TO ESTABLISH A COMMISSION TO PROTECT CONSUMER PRIVACY RIGHTS AND DATA SECURITY

EDUCATION

3. ADDRESSING HIGHER EDUCATION AFFORDABILITY AND STUDENT DEBT RELIEF

4. TO INVEST IN EDUCATION TO MEET LEANDRO RULINGS
5. TO FUND UNIVERSAL, QUALITY, EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION
6. CALLING FOR A REVIEW OF THE ROLE AND USE OF SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICERS

ENVIRONMENT/LAND USE

7. SUPPORTING ENACTMENT OF A CARBON TAX AND DIVIDEND
8. IN SUPPORT OF PROTECTION OF SEVEN MILE CREEK AND THE BOUNDARIES OF THE PROTECTED AND CRITICALLY PROTECTED ENO RIVER WATERSHEDS
9. TO SUPPORT RESPONSIBLE LAND USE PRIORITIES IN AND AROUND BUCKHORN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT WITHIN RURAL ORANGE COUNTY

FINANCIAL

10. SUPPORTING THE REINTRODUCTION OF THE POSTAL BANKING ACT

FIRST AMENDMENT

11. TO REPEAL ARTICLE 6G OF CHAPTER 147 OF THE N.C.G.S., DIVESTMENT FROM COMPANIES BOYCOTTING ISRAEL

HEALTHCARE

12. IN SUPPORT OF HR 1976 - MEDICARE FOR ALL ACT OF 2021
13. TO PAY FAMILY CAREGIVERS WHO PROVIDE HOME HEALTH CARE SERVICES
14. TO ESTABLISH A NORTH CAROLINA HEALTHCARE CONSUMER PROTECTION BUREAU
15. CALLING FOR ENACTMENT OF MEDICAL AID IN DYING (MAID) LEGISLATION

IMMIGRATION

16. TO OPPOSE ANTI-IMMIGRATION BILLS IN NC HOUSE AND SENATE

JUSTICE/PUBLIC SAFETY

17. CALLING FOR FEDERAL JUDICIAL REFORM
18. FOR CONSTITUTIONAL AND EQUITABLE CRIMINAL JUSTICE IN NORTH CAROLINA
19. IN SUPPORT OF HB 261: RAISE MIN AGE / JUVENILE JURISDICTION
20. ON HATE CRIMES
21. OPPOSING CHILD MARRIAGE IN NORTH CAROLINA

UNIVERSAL BROADBAND

22. FOR UNIVERSAL BROADBAND IN NORTH CAROLINA

CIVIL RIGHTS

23. IN SUPPORT OF H.R. 40 AND FOUNDATIONAL BLACK AMERICANS
24. IN SUPPORT OF THE NC CRED CAMPAIGN TO REMOVE CONFEDERATE MONUMENTS

VOTING/REDISTRICTING

25. TO EXPAND AND PROTECT VOTING RIGHTS IN THE UNITED STATES
26. ON REDISTRICTING AS PROVIDED IN THE FOR THE PEOPLE ACT OF 2021

CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM

1. A RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF H.R. 403, TRANSPARENCY IN CORPORATE POLITICAL SPENDING ACT

WHEREAS, The Transparency in Corporate Spending Act would repeal a policy rider in the 2020 appropriations law and provide an avenue for the federal government to require disclosure of political spending by publicly-traded companies; and

WHEREAS, The Supreme Court's decision in *Citizens United v. FEC* struck down dollar limits for corporate political advocacy under the First Amendment right to free speech; and

WHEREAS, Under *Citizens United*, companies indirectly provide funds for campaign advertising by contributing to dark money "super PACs" (political action committees) even when they are not formally coordinating with a candidate or political party; and

WHEREAS, Dark money donors, including wealthy individuals, and nonprofits that are not required to disclose their donors, spend millions of dollars on independently-produced ads and other communications promoting or attacking candidates; and

WHEREAS, The original sources of donations to "dark money" super PACs are often unclear and difficult to trace; and

WHEREAS, Since *Citizens United*, super PACs, including 501(c)(6) trade associations and 501(c)(4) "social welfare" organizations, which may accept undisclosed "dark money" contributions for election-related advocacy, have been a major funding source for congressional and down-ballot races; and

WHEREAS, As reported by GovTrack, 2,276 super PACs spent over \$2.1 billion dollars to support candidates in state and federal campaigns in the 2020 election where small amounts of money can have a major impact; and

WHEREAS, An election system that is skewed heavily toward wealthy donors also sustains racial bias and reinforces the racial wealth gap; and

WHEREAS, The American people should have full disclosure about how public companies from which they buy products and services spend their money on political advocacy; and

WHEREAS, Lack of transparency is a threat to citizens' faith in the political system and to shareholders' and investors' confidence; provides opportunities for bias, preferential treatment,

and backroom deals; and increases the vulnerability of U.S. elections to international interference; now therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the Orange County Democratic Party supports increased public oversight of publicly-traded companies to provide more transparency about their spending on environmental, social, and governance issues, and on political advocacy; and

RESOLVED, That the Orange County Democratic Party supports H.R. 403, the Transparency in Corporate Political Spending Act, which would remove the policy rider in the 2020 appropriations bill and provide a means for increased oversight of our country's wealthiest corporations, non-profits, and individual donors as well as the adoption of a rule by the Securities and Exchange Commission to require public companies to disclose their political spending; and

RESOLVED, That the Orange County Democratic Party supports publicly-funded elections to help candidates rely less on big checks and special interests and be more responsive to the communities they seek to represent; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Orange County Democratic Party supports the Democracy For All Amendment to overturn *Citizens United*, which was reintroduced in 2021 as House Joint Resolution 1 (H.J. Res. 1).

CONSUMER RIGHTS

2. A RESOLUTION TO ESTABLISH A COMMISSION TO PROTECT CONSUMER PRIVACY RIGHTS AND DATA SECURITY

WHEREAS, Information technology companies frequently harvest and distribute information on consumers without obtaining informed consent; and

WHEREAS, Individuals lack the power and knowledge to understand and/or prohibit this activity; and

WHEREAS, The extraction of personal user data deployed by online companies rises information asymmetry in markets that translates into rising overall economic inequality in the economy; and

WHEREAS, The dominance of large data companies eliminates competition in the marketplace to properly value user data and protect individual privacy and further undermines the market mechanism against abuse and violation of personal data and privacy; now therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the Orange County Democratic Party calls on the North Carolina General Assembly to establish a commission to review predatory and inappropriate data collection techniques that violate the consumer's informed consent; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Orange County Democratic Party calls on the North Carolina General Assembly to pass legislation that limits the sale of individual consumer information without the consumer's express consent.

EDUCATION

3. A RESOLUTION ADDRESSING HIGHER EDUCATION AFFORDABILITY AND STUDENT DEBT RELIEF

WHEREAS, Four-year college and university tuition costs have risen more than twice as fast as inflation in the past 36 years; and

WHEREAS, Resident tuition per semester at UNC-Chapel Hill has risen over 6 times faster than inflation in the same time span and non-resident tuition has risen over 4 times faster than inflation; and

WHEREAS, The burden of excessively high tuition prices falls disproportionately on lower-income students and families, and lower-income families are disproportionately African-American, Native American, Latinx, and Asian-American; and

WHEREAS, The intersectional nature of tuition-cost barriers deepens historical and institutionalized racial disparities, which will only continue to perpetuate these divides in the future; and

WHEREAS, A bachelor's degree is increasingly a minimum requirement for higher-level jobs in today's workforce; and

WHEREAS, Graduates nationally hold over \$1.7 trillion in student loan, of which over \$44 billion is held by North Carolinians; and

WHEREAS, Women, specifically African-American women, carry a disproportionately large burden of student debt, holding over \$900 billion of debt; now therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the Orange County Democratic Party urges the United States Congress to substantially increase allocated federal funds to reduce higher education costs to students; and

RESOLVED, That the Orange County Democratic Party urges the North Carolina General Assembly to pass legislation to tie North Carolina public colleges and universities' tuition to inflation and keep tuition costs low or free for all students while maintaining full funding for those institutions; and

RESOLVED, That the Orange County Democratic Party urges the North Carolina General Assembly to pass legislation to make all North Carolina community colleges tuition free; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Orange County Democratic Party urges the United States Congress, the President of the United States, and the North Carolina General Assembly and Governor to enact immediate student debt relief measures and provisions to limit future student debt.

4. A RESOLUTION TO INVEST IN EDUCATION TO MEET LEANDRO RULINGS

WHEREAS, Throughout history, North Carolina leaders recognized that a strong public education system served both the economic and the social progress of the state; and

WHEREAS, North Carolina was recognized during the 1980s and 1990s as an example of how state policymakers could lift a state from the bottom of the state rankings by making strong investments, and North Carolina became a model extensively studied by the National Education Goals Panel when its efforts resulted in sharp increases in student performance, posting the largest student achievement gains of any state in mathematics, and realizing substantial progress in reading, becoming the first southern state to score above the national average in fourth grade reading and math; and

WHEREAS, Legislative cuts over the last few years, have eliminated or greatly reduced many of the programs that were put in place and have undermined the quality and equity gains that were previously made, and declines in achievement have occurred since 2013 in mathematics and reading on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), and achievement gaps have widened; and

WHEREAS, The Supreme Court of North Carolina affirmed in the Leandro v. the State of North Carolina decision in 1997 that the state has a constitutional responsibility to provide every student with an equal opportunity for a sound basic education and that the state was failing to meet that responsibility; and

WHEREAS, The Supreme Court ruled in 2004 that North Carolina's constitutional obligation to provide a sound basic education requires competent and well-trained teachers and principals, as well as equitable access to sufficient resources; and

WHEREAS, In 2018, Judge David Lee, who oversees North Carolina's compliance with Leandro, ordered WestEd, an independent, nonparty consultant to develop detailed, comprehensive, written recommendations for specific actions necessary to achieve sustained compliance with the constitutional mandates articulated in the Leandro case; and

WHEREAS, On December 10th, 2019, WestEd released their findings and a sequenced action plan to meet the State's constitutional obligation; and

WHEREAS, In September 2020, Judge David Lee signed a consent order calling for \$427 million in additional education spending to help the state meet its constitutional obligation to provide all children with the opportunity to obtain a sound basic education. More than half — \$235 million — of the recommended \$427 million in additional spending would be earmarked for teacher pay raises, and \$144.8 million would be spent to revise the state's school funding formula to direct more money to students with the greatest needs; and

WHEREAS, From the late 1940s through the turn of the century, North Carolina voters approved state obligation bonds on average every 10 years when it became apparent that local resources could not keep pace with growing facility needs, and it has been 25 years (1996) since the state of North Carolina last issued a significant infusion of funding for school construction (\$1.8 billion school bond issue in 1996, which in today's dollars would be worth more than \$2.9 billion); and

WHEREAS, Counties in North Carolina have attempted to provide funds to address the gap left by inadequate school funding at the state level, at times to the detriment of other important social programs, and many counties lack the resources to properly fill that gap; now therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the Orange County Democratic Party calls on the North Carolina General Assembly to introduce and negotiate passage of legislation that will fund the action plan outlined by WestEd and endorsed by Judge David Lee to provide a sound basic education for students in the state of North Carolina; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Orange County Democratic Party calls on the North Carolina General Assembly to refer a bond measure to the ballot which provides a minimum of \$2.9 billion for school construction.

5. A RESOLUTION TO FUND UNIVERSAL, QUALITY, EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

WHEREAS, The neuroscience of early child brain development, established over decades of research in neuroimaging and behavioral investigation, informs us of the critical time period of birth to five years for learning and setting the foundation for a prosperous and sustainable society; and

WHEREAS, The neuroscience of early child brain development also indicates that most neural connections for language, learning, and higher cognitive function are formed within the first 24 months of life and early experiences determine whether the circuits are strong or weak; and

WHEREAS, In the absence of strong responses during early childhood the brain's architecture does not form as expected, which can lead to disparities in learning, disabilities and behavior problems; and

WHEREAS, Numerous organizations including the NC League of Women Voters, the NC Coalition for Early Education Coalition, The Think Babies™ NC Alliance believe that “policies, programs, and funding should ensure healthy beginnings, support families with young children, and make high-quality early care and learning environments more accessible and affordable to all parents who want and need them, ensuring strong development for North Carolina’s infants and toddlers in their earliest years, will prepare our babies to grow, learn and succeed – and help our communities, workforce and economy become stronger”; and

WHEREAS, Research by Nobel Prize-winning economist James Heckman showed that every \$1 invested in high quality early childhood programs can yield returns between \$4 and \$16 by increasing personal income, economic development, and societal benefits; now therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the Orange County Democratic Party calls on the North Carolina General Assembly to prioritize long term funding for universal, quality, early childhood education from Birth to 5 years through investing in early childhood priorities established by the Leandro court case and state action plan, including expansion of SmartStart and NC Pre-K programs, early learning salary supplements for the early childhood workforce; and strengthening the NC Infant Toddler Early Intervention Program.

6. A RESOLUTION CALLING FOR A REVIEW OF THE ROLE AND USE OF SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICERS

WHEREAS, The events of the last year, involving racial violence and the abuse against people of color by the police, and a white supremacist insurrection, have traumatized and divided our nation, and

WHEREAS, The North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, upon a motion passed by the State Board of Education in recognition of the need to restructure our state's K-12 social studies curriculum in a way that teaches the state and country's history of racism and continuing racial discrimination, recently undertook a comprehensive revision of the curriculum; and

WHEREAS, There is related concern that police in our schools reinforce the discriminatory discipline practices imposed more heavily on children of color and/or children from low-income families; now therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the Orange County Democratic Party calls on our County Commissioners, Orange County School Board, and the Chapel Hill Carrboro School Board to review the role and school's use of school resource officers (SROs); and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That such a review may determine whether budgets for school safety officers should be redirected to student support services.

ENVIRONMENT/LAND USE

7. A RESOLUTION SUPPORTING ENACTMENT OF A CARBON TAX AND DIVIDEND

WHEREAS, The United States has re-joined the 2015 Paris Climate Agreement that seeks to limit global temperature increases to no more than two degrees Celsius (and preferably 1.5 degrees Celsius) by 2100; and

WHEREAS, There is a scientific consensus that carbon emissions are contributing to global temperature increases and that reduction of carbon emissions will be essential to meeting the Paris Climate Agreement goals; and

WHEREAS, The United States is the second-greatest contributor, after China, to world carbon emissions; and

WHEREAS, The European Union has already taken concrete measures to reduce carbon emissions by setting a price on carbon; and

WHEREAS, There is a consensus among economists that a carbon tax is the most equitable and efficient way to reduce carbon emissions through raising the cost of such emissions and rebating the revenue generated by the tax to all U.S. citizens, thus minimizing any regressive impact on lower-income citizens; now therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the North Carolina Democratic Party supports the adoption of a federal carbon tax that raises the cost of carbon emissions and rebates the revenues of the tax to all American citizens.

8. A RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF PROTECTION OF SEVEN MILE CREEK AND THE BOUNDARIES OF THE PROTECTED AND CRITICALLY PROTECTED ENO RIVER WATERSHEDS

WHEREAS, One of the goals of the Orange County Board of County Commissioners is to “Create, preserve, and protect a natural environment that includes clean water, clean air, wildlife, important natural lands, and sustainable energy for present and future generations;” and

WHEREAS, Safe and abundant water is a critical component of preserving and growing Orange County’s economy; and

WHEREAS, Seven Mile Creek is a major tributary of the Eno River and lies within the Upper Eno Protected Watershed and the Upper Eno Critical Watershed in Orange County; and

WHEREAS, North Carolina has designated the Upper Eno Watershed a class “WS-II Watershed” with “High Quality and Nutrient Sensitive Water”, which means that it provides high quality drinking water for 7300 residents of Hillsborough and other communities downstream; and

WHEREAS, Significant water pollution runoff resulting from industrial development affecting the Upper Eno Critical Watershed would empty into Seven Mile Creek, and

WHEREAS, Seven Mile Creek empties into a section of the Eno River that has recently been proposed by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service to be designated as critical habitat for three native, imperiled North Carolina species; and

WHEREAS, A report by The North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission lists development and pollution as primary threats to these populations; and

WHEREAS, The “Seven Mile Creek Natural Area” (which Seven Mile Creek runs through) is a portion of a larger 366-acre “Upper Eno Nature Preserve”, and is part of one of the larger blocks of natural land undisturbed by roads and development in central Orange County; and

WHEREAS, The “Seven Mile Creek Natural Area” includes portions of two significant natural heritage areas, one of which (“Seven Mile Creek Sugar Maple Bottom”) is considered the richest bottomland remaining in the county, hosting state-listed rare plants and significant wildlife species; and

WHEREAS, The Orange County Comprehensive Land Use Plan states that the County’s “Environmental Responsibility for Natural Resources” is to: “Assess and where possible mitigate adverse impacts created to the natural resources of [the proposed development] site and adjoining area;” now therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the Orange County Democratic Party recognizes the importance of sustainable management of freshwater resources, and deems it an essential responsibility of the Orange County leadership to preserve the integrity of Seven Mile Creek and to maintain the County-designated boundaries of the Protected and Critically Protected Eno River Watersheds.

9. A RESOLUTION TO SUPPORT RESPONSIBLE LAND USE PRIORITIES IN AND AROUND BUCKHORN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT WITHIN RURAL ORANGE COUNTY

WHEREAS, Orange County and the City of Mebane are seeking to expand the Buckhorn Economic Development District in order to encourage opportunities for industrial growth; and

WHEREAS, The Buckhorn Economic Development District and unincorporated area of Efland were identified as early as 2001 as a Commercial Industrial Transition Activity Node (CITAN) in Orange County's Comprehensive Land Use Plan; and

WHEREAS, Orange County provided construction of water and sewer facilities, transferring ownership to the City of Mebane of the entire service area per a 2004 Utility Service Agreement between the City of Mebane and Orange County; and

WHEREAS, Orange County and the City of Mebane embarked on collaborative planning known as the Efland-Mebane Small Area Plan in 2006 to address potential future growth within said area; and

WHEREAS, A 2012 Utility Service Agreement Amendment expanded the utility service area and resulted in the inclusion of unincorporated county land into the City of Mebane's future land use development plan; and

WHEREAS, The Buckhorn Area Plan Study was commissioned by Orange County and the City of Mebane's planning departments to identify county parcels outside of Mebane's corporate limits most suitable for immediate industrial development; and

WHEREAS, The Buckhorn Area Plan Study has identified county parcels outside of Mebane's corporate limits and comprehensive land use plans most suitable for extending utility service area for industrial growth; and

WHEREAS, Orange County and the City of Mebane are seeking to expand the Buckhorn Economic Development District in order to encourage opportunities for industrial growth; and

WHEREAS, Because no county easement exists east of Buckhorn road, potential developers are required to petition the City of Mebane to annex county lands in order access utilities to support future development; and

WHEREAS, Expanding the boundaries of such properties would surround rural area residents with industrial growth incongruous with existing Land Use plans and result in the incorporation of rural residential areas into the Economic Development District; and

WHEREAS, The expansion of the Buckhorn Economic Development District by the City of Mebane, but not Orange County, leaves residents without recourse in the event of annexation;

WHEREAS, Land Use Priorities should be determined through a public hearing process; and

WHEREAS, The consequences of encroaching industrial development into residential areas creates air, noise, sound, and water pollution that would negatively impact the surrounding environment; now therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the Orange County Democratic Party encourages the Board of County Commissioners to develop an inter-local agreement that incorporates development standards adopted by both Orange County and the City of Mebane for Land Use Priorities.

FINANCIAL

10. A RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE REINTRODUCTION OF THE POSTAL BANKING ACT

WHEREAS, The United States Postal Service is provided to the people by the United States government by Act of Congress, is authorized by the Constitution, and is supported by the people; and

WHEREAS, A USPS office is located in every North Carolina county, and these offices provide the infrastructure to expand USPS services with expanded and accessible lower-cost banking services; and

WHEREAS, The number of bank branches in the United States is declining and low-income neighborhoods have been hardest hit; 93% of branch closings since 2008 have been in neighborhoods with a median income below the national average; and

WHEREAS, Rural households in North Carolina are less likely to have home internet access, which can provide an alternative to traditional banking services, even as branch banks abandon rural areas; and

WHEREAS, Recent estimates suggest that one in four households is at least partially outside the financial mainstream, or underserved by traditional banks; and that one in 13 households is unbanked, or without a bank account; and

WHEREAS, Traditional banking services are increasingly expensive, and that minimum balance requirements to open and maintain an account can be beyond the means of many underserved populations; and

WHEREAS, The USPS already offers a variety of financial services including money orders and cashing treasury checks; and

WHEREAS, Expanding the kinds of financial products available from the postal service could help underserved populations, who are more likely to be African American and Latino, and who are disproportionately located in rural areas of North Carolina; and

WHEREAS, The average underserved household has been estimated to spend over \$2,000 annually in fees and interest with Alternative Financial Services (AFS) industries such as payday lenders and through services such as check cashing fees and prepaid debit cards fees; and

WHEREAS, Expanding low-cost alternatives to traditional retail bank services could help addressing racial and wealth inequality; now therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the North Carolina Democratic Party 2021 Platform specifically recognize that postal banking services promote an economy that serves the people of North Carolina, and reaffirms its support for consumer-driven products and services such as bill payment, savings accounts, and small-dollar loans; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Orange County Democratic Party supports the reintroduction of the Postal Banking Act which would amend Title 39, United States Code to provide expanded, basic financial services, and as most recently introduced in the 116th Congress.

FIRST AMENDMENT

11. A RESOLUTION TO REPEAL ARTICLE 6G OF CHAPTER 147 OF THE N.C.G.S., DIVESTMENT FROM COMPANIES BOYCOTTING ISRAEL

WHEREAS, The Supreme Court of the United States in the case of *NAACP v. Claiborne Hardware Co.* unanimously affirmed that boycotts are protected free speech under the First Amendment; and

WHEREAS, Boycotts were an effective non-violent means of protest in the 1960s to oppose segregation and Jim Crow laws in the US; and

WHEREAS, Boycotts were an effective non-violent means of protest in the 1980s to pressure South Africa to end apartheid rule; and

WHEREAS, Boycotts are a non-violent means of protest to help restore the full human rights of the Palestinian people as stated in the North Carolina Democratic Party platform; and

WHEREAS, Article 6G of Chapter 147 of the N.C.G.S., entitled Divestment from Companies Boycotting Israel, places an undue burden on North Carolina businesses seeking to contract with North Carolina state government and entities that also participate in constitutionally protected free speech to restore full human rights of the Palestinian people; and

WHEREAS, General Statute § 147-86.80(4) defines a “Restricted company” as a company that appears on the list of companies that are engaged in a boycott of Israel developed by the State Treasurer under G.S. 147-86.81(a)(1); and

WHEREAS, General Statute § 147-86.82, entitled Restrictions on Contracts with the State or Subdivisions of the State, states:

- (a) A company that is identified as a restricted company is ineligible to contract with the State or any political subdivision of the State;
- (b) Any contract entered into with a company that is identified as a restricted company at the time of contract is void ab initio;
- (c) Upon receiving information that a company that was not identified as a restricted company at the time of contract has later been identified as a restricted company, the State agency shall review the information and offer the company an opportunity to respond. If the company fails to demonstrate that the company should not have been identified as a restricted company within 90 days after notification by the State agency, then the State agency shall take action as may be appropriate and provided for by law, rule, or contract;
- (d) Contracts in existence on October 1, 2017, with restricted companies shall be allowed to expire in accordance with the terms of the contract; and

WHEREAS, Article 6G amounts to state imposed speech on private companies in favor of a foreign country; and

WHEREAS, Similar laws passed by state governments in Kansas, Arizona, Texas and Arkansas have either been found unconstitutional and/or the enforcement of said laws has been blocked by the courts; and

WHEREAS, The North Carolina Democratic Party platform makes a commitment to “restoring full human rights for the Palestinian populations”; and

WHEREAS, repeal of this unconstitutional law will be essential to achieve those goals; now therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the Orange County Democratic Party encourages the North Carolina Democratic Party to support the repeal of General Statute, Chapter 147 – Article 6G, Divestment from Companies Boycotting Israel (§ 147-86.80 - § 147-86.84) for being an unconstitutional law infringing on the First Amendment right to free speech.

HEALTHCARE

12. A RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF HR 1976 - MEDICARE FOR ALL ACT OF 2021

WHEREAS, Every person in North Carolina needs and deserves high quality health care to live a decent life; and

WHEREAS, The number of Americans without health insurance before the COVID-19 pandemic was nearly 30 million and more than 40 million were underinsured, despite the Affordable Care Act; and

WHEREAS, The current COVID-19 pandemic has led to record levels of unemployment, loss of employer-sponsored health insurance, a severely strained health care system, and widespread illness and mental health crises, placing significant stress on individuals, families, and communities; and

WHEREAS, Millions of people ration healthcare and medications and tens of thousands die each year in the US as they delay or do not seek needed healthcare because they don't have the money, making them sicker and poorer; and

WHEREAS, Such people are much more likely to develop serious illness if exposed to COVID-19 and face higher mortality rates from the disease as a result; and

WHEREAS, Millions of people have private insurance coverage so inadequate that a major illness leads to financial ruin, with medical bills contributing to two-thirds of all bankruptcies and one-third of GoFundMe campaigns in the US; and

WHEREAS, The ever-increasing costs of healthcare mediated by insurance companies severely challenge already strapped state, municipal, individual and family budgets; and

WHEREAS, The existing system threatens small businesses that cannot compete with larger companies in providing affordable health insurance; and

WHEREAS, There are over 1 million North Carolinians that are uninsured, with over 7000 in Orange County, and with health coverage costing the county \$1,615,735 for fiscal year 2020-2021 with annual increases; and

WHEREAS, The Medicare for All Act of 2021 (HR 1976) would provide national health insurance for every person in the United States, including every person in North Carolina, for all preventative and necessary medical care, including doctor office visits and prescription drugs; hospital, surgical and outpatient services; emergency services; reproductive care; dental and vision care; and long-term care with no co-pays, deductibles, or out-of-pocket costs; and

WHEREAS, The Medicare for All Act of 2021 would provide freedom and choice to patients by removing insurance companies and healthcare networks from their relationships with doctors and other healthcare providers, medical offices, and hospitals, allowing them to get the care they need anywhere in the country; and

WHEREAS, Recent polls show that a majority of Americans support a universal single payer system as provided in the Medicare for All Act of 2021; and

WHEREAS, The Medicare for All Act of 2021 would simplify the existing costly bureaucratic system which is designed to limit patient choices and stand between patients and the healthcare they need in order to make as much money as possible for insurance and hospital companies, their CEOs and their shareholders; and

WHEREAS, The universal system proposed in the Medicare for All Act of 2021 is far less expensive than the current system and would cover the healthcare needs of every person in the U.S. from cradle to death; and

WHEREAS, Numerous academic studies have concluded that the savings on administrative costs under a single-payer Medicare for All system would be enough to cover the uninsured and underinsured — the problem is lack of will, not lack of money; now therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the Orange County Democratic Party urges our House and Senate delegation to the United States Congress to vocally support and vote in support of HR 1976 - Medicare For All Act of 2021.

13. A RESOLUTION TO PAY FAMILY CAREGIVERS WHO PROVIDE HOME HEALTH CARE SERVICES

WHEREAS, 2015 was the first year nationally that more money was spent on home care than nursing home care, a trend that will continue as nursing home care becomes too expensive for many American families; and

WHEREAS, About 41 million Americans provide care without pay to a family member, and do so for an average of 16 hours per week, according to a 2019 study by the AARP Public Policy Institute; and

WHEREAS, Family caregivers often are forced to take unpaid leave or quit their jobs to care for a family member, thus losing their paychecks, retirement and pension benefits as well as social security benefits; and

WHEREAS, A few programs exist that give stipends/financial aid to family members who care for US military veterans and eligible Medicaid recipients in some states; however, most Medicaid programs do not permit spouses and parents of minor children to be paid caregivers; and

WHEREAS, Medicare pays nothing for in-home care provided by family members and only pays professional home health service providers for intermittent skilled nursing, physical and occupational therapy, medical social services, and home health aide services, leaving the bulk of custodial and personal care to be provided by family members; and

WHEREAS, A number of European countries (e.g., Austria, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, and Sweden) incorporate cash-for-care schemes within the framework of their Long Term Care plans to give disabled or elderly people the opportunity to choose among different kinds of care and care providers, and to allow recipients to compensate and employ family members who provide custodial and personal care; now therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the Orange County Democratic Party calls on the United States Congress to create a cash-for-care plan for disabled Medicare recipients that allows beneficiaries a certain amount of funds based on their need for care to be spent on securing the necessary care for themselves that is aligned with their medical, financial, and personal circumstances, including the option to employ family members to provide custodial and personal care; and

RESOLVED, That the Orange County Democratic Party urges the North Carolina General Assembly to revise its Medicaid rules to allow spouses and parents of minor children to be paid caregivers and make free caregiver training and certification available through NC's Community Colleges; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Orange County Democratic Party calls on the United States Congress to pass a law that guarantees Social Security Credits for workers who have to spend time outside the workforce to care for dependent children or sick or disabled family members to improve the adequacy of Social Security benefits, as well as work toward gender equality as it is generally women whose gaps in workforce participation lead to fewer years of contributions, lower lifetime average earnings, and consequently lower Social Security payments.

14. A RESOLUTION TO ESTABLISH A NORTH CAROLINA HEALTHCARE CONSUMER PROTECTION BUREAU

WHEREAS, Healthcare represents nearly 20% of the American economy and a large share of individual households' income; and

WHEREAS, Patients lack the power, insider knowledge, and resources necessary to remediate disagreements with large healthcare organizations, navigate difficult care decisions, contest surprise medical bills for unknowingly receiving care from out-of-network providers, or dispute claims from debt collectors; and

WHEREAS, According to a 2016 study by the Kaiser Foundation, 70% of those with medical debt reported that they had to cut spending on basic necessities (food, clothes, etc), 59% reported that they had to use most or all of their savings; 41% reported that they had to take a second job; and 37% reported that they had to borrow money; and

WHEREAS, According to the CFPB, half of all collections tradelines that appear on credit reports are reported by debt collectors seeking to collect on medical bills claimed to be owed to hospitals and other medical providers, affecting the credit score of nearly one-fifth of all consumers in the credit reporting system; and

WHEREAS, Medical bankruptcies represent 62% of all personal bankruptcies, as ordinary families often cannot pay for rapidly rising medical expenses; now therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the Orange County Democratic Party calls for the North Carolina General Assembly to create a North Carolina Healthcare Consumer Protection Bureau under the auspices of the State Attorney General's office that provides resources and assistance to North Carolina patient consumers before, during, and after receipt of healthcare services.

15. A RESOLUTION CALLING FOR ENACTMENT OF MEDICAL AID IN DYING (MAID) LEGISLATION

WHEREAS, An End of Life of incurable, interminable pain and suffering should not be forced on any individual who, in full consciousness and mental competence, wishes to terminate their life through humane medical intervention; and

WHEREAS, The suffering patient and their family, loved ones, and caregivers are often legally impeded in fulfilling the patient's wishes to abbreviate the dying process on their own terms and at the time and place of their choosing; and

WHEREAS, MAID describes a medical practice defined by rigorous established standards of care, which enables a mentally competent, terminally ill adult to obtain a prescription which the patient may choose to self-administer to advance the imminence of an approaching death; and

WHEREAS, In the absence of MAID, patients may become desperate to relieve suffering caused by the terminal illness and turn to violent alternatives; and

WHEREAS, Many find comfort, peace of mind and a sense of autonomy in having access to options at the end of life, including MAID, even if they choose not to exercise those options; and

WHEREAS, Compassion and a respect for the autonomy of the individual as the one best situated to decide their end of life should outweigh the state's interest in preserving life at all costs; and

WHEREAS, Ten US jurisdictions (OR, WA, VT, ME, HI, NJ, CA, CO, DC and NM) have enacted laws allowing the physician-assisted early termination of life, with over twenty-five other states, (including North Carolina in 2015, 2017 and 2019) considering such legislation; and

WHEREAS, National polls indicate over 66% of registered voters are in favor of allowing a competent adult with less than six months to live to be able to access MAID; and

WHEREAS, Since Oregon became the first US State to enact MAID legislation in 1997, fewer than 6,700 people nationwide have applied for a MAID prescription, and in no case has any abuse, coercion, or undue influence been reported or alleged, and every application for a MAID prescription has been in strict compliance with the relevant laws and regulations; now therefore be it

RESOLVED, That Orange County Democratic Party recognizes the practice of MAID as a desirable medical option for terminally ill, mentally competent adults who so choose; and
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That North Carolina shall enact an End of Life Option Act allowing an adult patient, of sound mind, diagnosed by two qualified physicians as suffering from an incurable, terminal illness likely to result in death within six months, to obtain a

prescription for medication, which the patient may choose to self-administer to advance the time of approaching death, and any third party assisting such adult patient shall be immune from criminal prosecution or civil process arising therefrom, and the cause of death arising from usage of said MAID shall be the underlying disease or illness, and shall not be deemed a suicide.

IMMIGRATION

16. A RESOLUTION TO OPPOSE ANTI-IMMIGRATION BILLS IN NC HOUSE AND SENATE

WHEREAS, NC Senate Bill 101 (Require Cooperation with ICE 2.0.) is an anti-immigrant "show me your papers" bill that circumvents the local authority of sheriffs by requiring them to cooperate with Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and assist in the federal government's deportation pipeline or face criminal charges; and

WHEREAS, This proposed House Bill 62 (Gov. Immigration Compliance/Enjoin Ordinances) is also an anti-immigrant bill that would further would allow anyone in NC to sue their local government if they believed that it the government was enacting any kind of pro-immigrant "sanctuary" policy; and

WHEREAS, There is no legal definition of "sanctuary" policies, so the intent of these bills is not compliance with the law, but to force punish sheriffs or other local elected officials to cooperate with Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) who choose to put community needs over federal immigration enforcement; and

WHEREAS, This bill, driven by racism and xenophobia, would open local governments to an unlimited number of groundless suits from citizens and anti-immigrant groups, draining valuable time and money from the government; and

WHEREAS, Members of immigrant communities would be more fearful of government and therefore less likely to call the police or trust other local governmental agencies, such as the Health Department, and so would be less likely to become vaccinated against Covid, thus endangering themselves as well as the greater community; and

WHEREAS, The Immigrants' Rights Alliance of North Carolina, a coalition of 30 organizations dedicated to protecting and defending the rights of immigrants in North Carolina said in a statement: "We strongly urge the North Carolina General Assembly to reject SB 101 and HB 62. North Carolinians deserve better from their elected officials than these divisive and harmful proposals;" now therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the Orange County Democratic Party urges all lawmakers to oppose SB 101 and HB 62 and similar bills that seek to interfere with local governments' relationship with their immigrant communities, and call on Governor Cooper to veto it, should it pass the NC Senate.

JUSTICE/PUBLIC SAFETY

17. A RESOLUTION CALLING FOR FEDERAL JUDICIAL REFORM

WHEREAS, By its explicit terms, the Code of Conduct for United States Judges does not apply to Justices of the U.S. Supreme Court; and

WHEREAS, Deference to and enforcement of the judgments and rulings of courts critically depends on public confidence in the legitimacy, integrity, and independence of judges and justices; and

WHEREAS, Courts are in danger of losing legitimacy when the public loses faith that judges and justices are ethical, unbiased, and fair; and

WHEREAS, There is before the United States Congress, sec. 7001 of H.R.1, For the People Act of 2021, which has passed the U.S. House of Representatives, and which would require a Code of Conduct be issued for all federal judges, including U.S. Supreme Court Justices; now therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the Orange County Democratic Party supports sec. 7001 of H.R.1 which would require a Code of Conduct be issued for all federal judges, including U.S. Supreme Court Justices; and

RESOLVED, That the Orange County Democratic Party supports extending the Code of Conduct to U.S. Supreme Court Justices, and providing a formal mechanism for review of conflicts by sitting Justices and lower federal court judges; and

RESOLVED, That the Orange County Democratic Party supports strengthening ethical rules in the Code of Conduct for all U.S. Judges and Justices to ensure that judges and justices recuse themselves when they have conflicts of interest, and to ensure accountability for judges who violate these rules; and

RESOLVED, That the Orange County Democratic Party supports transparent review of all federal judicial candidates by legislatively requiring the Judicial Conference of the United States to publicly post judicial nominees' financial reports, recusal decisions, and speeches, and by requiring the IRS to provide retrospective disclosure of five years of federal and state tax returns by all federal judicial candidates; and the extension of this transparency to all appointed candidates while they serve on the bench; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Orange County Democratic Party supports strengthening disciplinary actions available to the federal Judicial Conference to prevent judges from escaping misconduct investigations by leaving the court or by elevation to the United States Supreme Court.

18. A RESOLUTION FOR CONSTITUTIONAL AND EQUITABLE CRIMINAL JUSTICE IN NORTH CAROLINA

WHEREAS, Chapter 7A, Article 28 of the North Carolina General Statutes stipulates the imposition of monetary sanctions upon defendants in every criminal case, when the defendant is convicted, or enters a plea of guilty or nolo contendere, or when costs are assessed against a prosecuting witness; and

WHEREAS, These monetary sanctions are comprised of fines levied as punishment for criminal offenses, plus criminal court costs and fees, assessed on a by-use basis throughout the criminal justice process in accordance with the Criminal Court Costs and Fees Chart; and

WHEREAS, The North Carolina State Constitution delegates authority to the North Carolina General Assembly to define criminal court costs and fees and set corresponding financial obligations, as detailed within the Criminal Court Costs and Fees Chart; and

WHEREAS, The North Carolina State Constitution also delegates authority to the General Assembly to determine how revenue emanating from the collection of criminal court costs and fees is allocated; and

WHEREAS, The largest share of revenue from the collection of criminal court costs and fees is directed to the state General Fund and subsequently allocated to fund a range of government programs unrelated to the court system; and

WHEREAS, Criminal court costs and fees have risen exponentially over the past two decades, while the state repealed its estate tax, implemented a modified flat income tax, and reduced the corporate income tax rate; and

WHEREAS, Despite state and federal constitutional protections prohibiting punishment of an individual for their poverty, payment of criminal court fines, costs, and fees is enforced through draconian penalties with collateral consequences that trap people in a perpetual cycle of debt, including: additional monetary sanctions, probation extensions, exclusion from anti-poverty programs, driver's license revocation, and incarceration; and

WHEREAS, Under this economically-skewed system, low-income people routinely receive harsher punishments than high-income people for similar criminal offenses; and

WHEREAS, Judges have a constitutional obligation to inquire about an individual's financial status before imposing criminal court fines, costs, and fees, but judges waived criminal court fines, costs, and fees in less than five percent of applicable judgements statewide in 2018; and

WHEREAS, Over the past ten years, the state has implemented numerous administrative and procedural requirements to restrict the capacity of judges to waive criminal court fines, costs, and fees; and

WHEREAS, Racial disparities exist at every stage of the criminal justice system, including the imposition and collection of criminal court fines, costs, and fees; and

WHEREAS, The financial burden of criminal court fines, costs, and fees is disproportionately felt by low-income people and people of color; and

WHEREAS, It is estimated that more than 650,000 people held unpaid criminal court debt in North Carolina as of 2020; and

WHEREAS, The N.C. Task Force for Racial Equity in Criminal Justice on December 14, 2020 recommended several policy changes relating to the imposition and collection of criminal court fines, costs, and fees, including: assessing a defendant's ability to pay prior to levying any criminal court fines and fees, reducing use of criminal court fines and fees, eliminating state government reliance on criminal court fines and fees, and developing a process to eliminate criminal justice debt; and

WHEREAS, State reliance on the collection of court costs, fines, and fees is a form of regressive taxation disproportionately imposed upon people of color; now therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the Orange County Democratic Party urges the General Assembly, the Office of the Governor, and the state Judicial Branch to consider all avenues to rework the current process of imposing and collecting criminal court fines, costs, and fees, including: uniform assessments of a defendant's ability to pay, expansion of judicial authority to grant waiver, statewide investment in criminal debt relief and restoration clinics, end the suspension and revocation of driver's licenses for failure to pay, and reduction of criminal court fines, costs, and fees generally.

19. A RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF HB 261: RAISE MIN AGE / JUVENILE JURISDICTION

WHEREAS, North Carolina has the lowest minimum age limit in the US that allows for children as young as six to be sent to juvenile court; and

WHEREAS, A 6-year-old was referred to juvenile court in NC in 2021 for picking a flower out of someone's yard while waiting for the school bus and was given crayons and a picture to color because his attention span was so short when he appeared in court; and

WHEREAS, The criminalization of children's behavior reveals a distinct racial and gender bias; for example, Black residents are 22 percent of North Carolina's population, but nearly half of the juvenile complaints filed against children ages 6 to 11 from 2015 to 2018 were against Black children, overwhelmingly boys; and

WHEREAS, A growing body of longitudinal neuroimaging research demonstrates that the human brain continues to develop well into a person's 20s, and it shows that the frontal lobe, responsible for executive functioning (such as long-term planning, working memory, and impulse control), is among the last areas of the brain to mature (suggesting that it is developmentally inappropriate for a child to be held accountable for misconduct in a criminal legal sense); and

WHEREAS, The National Center for Juvenile Justice recommends that the minimum age at which children should be brought before a judge in juvenile court be raised to age 14, a standard set forth by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child as the most common minimum age of criminal responsibility internationally; and

WHEREAS, Many children who find themselves in the juvenile legal system for breaking laws and rules often have cognitive-communication disorders (CCDs) that go untreated or unidentified; and

WHEREAS, A 2018 article in the Journal of Gender, Social Policy and the Law on CCDs and the school to prison pipeline, found that more than 80% of young people affected by zero-tolerance policies were found to have a CCD, a learning disability, or some combination; and

WHEREAS, N.C. State Rep. Marcia Morey (D-Durham) filed H.B. 261 on MARCH 11, 2021 to raise the minimum age for juvenile jurisdiction from age 6 to age 10; now therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the Orange County Democratic Party supports the efforts of H.B. 261 to raise the age at which a child can be brought before a judge from 6 to 10 as a good first step in dismantling the school-to-prison pipeline; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Orange County Democratic Party calls on the North Carolina General Assembly to form a committee to continue investigating ways to further dismantle the school-to-prison pipeline, including:

- further increasing the minimum age at which a child is brought before a judge on delinquency charges to 14 years old;
- allocating resources to close the gap in services that requires parents to seek assistance by bringing their child in front of a judge on undisciplined minor charges; and
- having the child's cognitive-communication abilities assessed by a licensed and accredited speech-language pathologist or psychologist before that child is adjudicated to determine the best treatment and dispensation of justice for the child.

20. A RESOLUTION ON HATE CRIMES

WHEREAS, The 2019 Briefing Report of the United States Commission on Civil Rights, "In the Name of Hate: Examining the Federal Government's Role in Responding to Hate Crimes," emphasized that the greatest challenges to understanding the severity and magnitude of hate crimes is the lack of sufficient data and lack of police training to report and identify hate crimes; and

WHEREAS, The 2019 FBI Report shows a 64 percent increase in Hate Crimes in North Carolina between 2013 and 2017 - not including the many more unreported; and

WHEREAS, North Carolina's Hate Crimes statute, adopted in 1993, does not require the collection of hate crimes data by law enforcement agencies; and

WHEREAS, In 2019 approximately 65 percent of North Carolina law enforcement agencies voluntarily reported to the FBI Hate Crimes Database; however, of the agencies reporting, only 24 percent reported a hate crime -- with 76 percent reporting zero incidences of hate crimes; and

WHEREAS, The University of North Carolina School of Government reported that of the 57 hate crimes charged under the current NC Hate Crimes statute in 2019, only 9 resulted in a conviction; and

WHEREAS, North Carolina's current Hate Crimes statute is one of only 15 in the nation that does not recognize hate crimes based on disability, gender identity or sexual orientation and allows for only a misdemeanor penalty; and

WHEREAS, Officials overseeing police training in North Carolina recently reported that their recruits spend about 30 minutes of class time on hate crimes; and

WHEREAS, Governor Roy Cooper's 2020 Racial Equity Task Force Report recommended that law enforcement training "include education on improving interactions with diverse populations, developing emotional intelligence skills, de-escalating tense situations and recognizing and addressing implicit bias;" and

WHEREAS, The tragedy which occurred in Atlanta, Georgia on March 16th was motivated by the suspect's apparent hatred of Asian Americans and of women and reflected a recent national increase in violence against said groups and others; now therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the Orange County Democratic Party calls on the North Carolina General Assembly to support the adoption of the Hate Crimes Prevention Act, HB 354, introduced in the House of Representatives by Representatives Nasif Majeed, Verla Insko, Pricey Harrison, and

Marcia Morey and in the Senate by Senators Jay Chaudhuri, Valerie Foushee, and Mujtaba Mohammed.

21. A RESOLUTION OPPOSING CHILD MARRIAGE IN NORTH CAROLINA

WHEREAS, Current North Carolina state law permits minors as young as 14 to marry legally in North Carolina by court order; and

WHEREAS, Persons as young as 16 in North Carolina are permitted to marry solely with the consent of both parents, with no protection in place to determine if the minor is a victim of coercion; and

WHEREAS, Child marriage (under age of 18) is internationally recognized as a violation of human rights as set out in the Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNFPA, 2012); and

WHEREAS, A 2020 study by ICRW on Child Marriage in North Carolina found that North Carolina has the lowest statutory legal age of marriage in the country (along with Alaska); and

WHEREAS, Between 2000 and 2019, marriage licenses in North Carolina in which at least one applicant was a minor numbered 3,949 and involved 4,218 minors, with only half of North Carolina's 100 counties reporting. Extrapolate across the other 50 counties in the state, and marriage applications involving minors in the past twenty years can be reasonably estimated at 8,000, or 400 per year, or more than one per day; and

WHEREAS, The majority of marriage applications in North Carolina involving a minor age 15 or below involved persons of age differences of more than 4 years, consummation of which would classify as statutory rape under existing law, absent the possibility of marriage under North Carolina statute; now therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the Orange County Democratic Party calls on the North Carolina General Assembly to support H41, Amend Lawful Age to Marry/18 Years of Age, introduced in the House of Representatives by Jason Saine, Kristin Baker, Ashton W. Clemmons, and Brian Turner and SB 35, introduced in the Senate by Senators Vickie Sawyer, Danny Britt, and Valerie Foushee.

UNIVERSAL BROADBAND

22. A RESOLUTION FOR UNIVERSAL BROADBAND IN NORTH CAROLINA

WHEREAS, Since the COVID-19 pandemic began, the level of reliance on the internet and the number of uses to which it has come to be applied have both skyrocketed. Working and learning from home, safe online shopping, visiting with family and friends online, and telemedicine all have become a necessity rather than a choice. While broadband access in rural and underserved communities has been a problem for years, the pandemic has made the gaps in service a critical issue; and

WHEREAS, Democrats are working diligently to bring reliable and affordable broadband to North Carolinians in the following ways:

- In 2020 Gov. Roy Cooper signed into law a bill that allowed electric cooperatives to seek federal funds to provide broadband to rural communities; thanks to this law, Piedmont Electric and RiverStreet Networks have launched a broadband pilot program in an effort to bring a reliable, affordable internet service to the unserved and underserved areas of our communities.
- The FIBER NC Act, currently stalled in committee, would give local governments the authority to build infrastructure for broadband and lease it to private corporations in a public-private partnership.
- HB 1122, if passed, would enact myriad measures to bridge the “digital divide,” including appropriating funds for a pilot program, called the “Homework Gap Initiative,” that would provide services to teachers and students and provide Wi-Fi on school buses. HB 1122 also authorizes public-private partnerships to bring broadband to unserved and underserved areas in rural North Carolina.
- HB 289, if passed, would authorize the Office of Broadband Infrastructure in the Department of Information Technology to map broadband across NC and this office also would be the designated agency for receipt and disbursement of federal grant funds intended for the State for broadband expansion; and

WHEREAS, These efforts are encouraging, but no bolder steps can be taken to make universal broadband a reality until the law passed in 2011 that has effectively halted the development of new municipal broadband systems is repealed. That bill, HB129, also known as the Level Playing Field Act, was a pet project of then-House Speaker and now-U.S. Sen. Thom Tillis on behalf of his friends in the cable industry. Now it is widening the state's economic rural-urban divide; and

WHEREAS, Wilson, the only community in North Carolina that is exempt from HB129 because its utility Greenlight was already providing such services at the time of the passage of this law, successfully demonstrated that community-owned broadband can drive local economic development and connect businesses, families, schools, teachers, and students with fast internet, all at lower costs and higher reliability than corporate providers; now therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the Orange County Democratic Party supports all efforts to bring about Universal Broadband to North Carolina because access to affordable and reliable internet services would encourage economic growth in rural areas, protect every child's constitutional right to a quality education, allow access to healthcare from underserved communities, and strengthen family and community ties; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Orange County Democratic Party firmly believes that access to broadband is a basic necessity for all North Carolinians that facilitates work, learning, healthcare, safety, life and leisure activities regardless of where they live and therefore calls for the repeal of the 2011 Law misleadingly called the Level Playing Field Act because, in the words of former FCC Chair Tom Wheeler: "The efforts of communities wanting better broadband should not be thwarted by the political power of those who, by protecting their monopoly, have failed to deliver acceptable service at an acceptable price."

CIVIL RIGHTS

23. A RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF H.R. 40 AND FOUNDATIONAL BLACK AMERICANS

WHEREAS, The United States House of Representatives has pending legislation, H.R. 40, Commission to Study and Develop Reparation Proposals for African-Americans Act; and

WHEREAS H.R. 40 does not specifically define the proposed beneficiaries of reparations, referring variously to “African-Americans,” “Black people,” “Africans and their descendents,” and “people of African descent;” and

WHEREAS Foundational Black Americans are the descendants of the Black people who survived one of the greatest atrocities in recorded history- American slavery. Foundational Black Americans (FBA) are the descendants of the Black People who built the United States from scratch; now therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the Orange County Democratic Party supports the commission proposed by H.R. 40 and calls on Congress and the President of the United States to pass into law meaningful policies (including any that may be implemented as a result of work done by the commission that may arise out of H.R. 40) that are beneficial to Foundational Black Americans.

**24. A RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF THE NC CRED
CAMPAIGN TO REMOVE CONFEDERATE MONUMENTS**

WHEREAS, The nonprofit North Carolina Commission on Racial & Ethnic Disparities in the Criminal Justice System (NC CRED) has a campaign to remove Confederate monuments around the state, including 42 monuments outside North Carolina courthouses; and

WHEREAS, Confederate monuments honor the legacies of slavery and white supremacy, and negate the ideal of equal justice for all; and

WHEREAS, The campaign is encouraging individuals who live or work in communities with these monuments to learn their history, and whether efforts are underway to remove them; and

WHEREAS, The campaign is working to identify members of each affected county's board of commissioners who might support removing the monuments; now therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the Orange County Democratic Party supports the NC CRED campaign goal to remove Confederate monuments from courthouse grounds in North Carolina; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the OCPD send a copy of this Resolution to James Williams, Jr., chair of NC CRED, and request that it be distributed to all Commission members.

VOTING/REDISTRICTING

25. A RESOLUTION TO EXPAND AND PROTECT VOTING RIGHTS IN THE UNITED STATES

WHEREAS, Voting is an essential right that allows citizens a voice in governance; and eligible citizens must be registered in order to vote; and

WHEREAS, Despite record turnouts in the November 2020 elections, only about 67% of eligible voters voted, and a December 2020 poll found the 80 million non-voters to be more disengaged and disaffected, less likely to believe politics can make a difference, and more likely to be younger, make less money, and have lower levels of education; and

WHEREAS, The 2020 presidential election was the most litigated in history with at least 60 legal challenges filed to invalidate lawfully-cast ballots, often in jurisdictions with a high proportion of minority voters; and

WHEREAS, As of mid-February 2021, states have carried over, pre-filed, or introduced over 250 bills nation-wide with provisions that restrict or expand voting access (or do both); and

WHEREAS, The Democratic Party is working to make sure all eligible Americans vote, including by legislative changes in the voter registration process and increased election security to address problems such as the “Big Lie” that the presidential election was “stolen;” and

WHEREAS, Since the inauguration of President Joe Biden, Democrats in the United States Congress have introduced two major pieces of legislation to address voting rights: the For the People Act and the John R. Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act (to reinstate the full strength of the 1965 Voting Rights Act); and

WHEREAS, The 1965 Voting Rights Act (VRA) has been recognized as the most effective civil rights legislation in United States history by safeguarding minority voting rights at state and local levels; and

WHEREAS, The Supreme Court in *Shelby County v. Holder* (2013) removed the federal oversight section of the VRA, which required pre-clearance for changes in voting rights by states identified as having a history of minority voter disenfranchisement, including North Carolina; and

WHEREAS, Within months of the Shelby County decision states began to enact restrictions that would have been subject to federal pre-clearance, and that have contributed to a trend of new restrictions adopted under the guise of “election integrity”; and

WHEREAS, Work to reinstate the full protections of the original, bipartisan VRA is ongoing in the current United States Congress through H.R. 4, the John R. Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act; and

WHEREAS, The Voting Rights Advancement Act does not target displacing state or local voting procedures, so long as the procedures do not unconstitutionally infringe on the electorate's right to vote free from discriminatory conditions; and

WHEREAS, the For the People Act (H R 1 and S 1) also includes voting rights and election security protections including affirming Congress's commitments to update and restore the protections of the 1965 VRA; protect Native American voting rights; support statehood for the District of Columbia with congressional voting rights for residents; provisions requiring early voting, voting by mail and same-day voter registration for federal elections; and provisions requiring states to modernize registration procedures and to establish and operate automatic voter registration; now therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the Orange County Democratic Party and the North Carolina Democratic Party strongly support the passage of the John R. Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act and the For the People Act.

26. A RESOLUTION ON REDISTRICTING AS PROVIDED IN THE FOR THE PEOPLE ACT OF 2021

WHEREAS, North Carolina's United States representatives and state legislators are elected from political divisions called districts with district lines drawn every 10 years following population data received from the Census Bureau; and

WHEREAS, Under state law district lines in North Carolina are drawn by the North Carolina General Assembly, and have traditionally been drawn by the majority party with little or no input from the minority party, or the public, and without sufficient safeguards to ensure that districts fairly represent voters; and

WHEREAS, In North Carolina partisan gerrymander by the manipulation of voting maps has entrenched the majority party's political power; and

WHEREAS, District lines drawn with the intent to advantage the majority party in North Carolina have resulted in drawn-out and expensive court challenges in state and federal courts; and

WHEREAS, The General Assembly spent over \$10.79 million in taxpayer dollars defending redistricting lawsuits by drawing and redrawing voting maps courts later declared unconstitutional; and

WHEREAS, In 2019 in *Rucho v. Common Cause*, the Supreme Court further crippled challenges to partisan gerrymandering by finding that while partisan gerrymandering may be "incompatible with democratic principles", federal courts are not the forum to hear partisan map-drawing cases; thereby, leaving challenges of political gerrymandering with state courts; and

WHEREAS, After the 2020 Census is released this year, the Republican-led North Carolina General Assembly will begin drawing new political maps that would be used through the 2030 elections, which is likely to trigger one of the most intense political fights this year; and

WHEREAS, North Carolina will likely gain another House seat with the release of 2020 Census data, increasing NC's delegation from 13 to 14 seats, and population growth in Democratic-leaning urban areas expected to outpace growth in rural areas where Republicans are favored by large margins; and

WHEREAS, Although North Carolina's changing demographics may not be in Republicans' favor, Republicans have the advantage politically. With a Republican majority in the North Carolina General Assembly coupled with Democratic Gov. Roy Cooper's inability to veto the maps, Republican legislators will have to consider the threat of lawsuits when drawing new districts, but not bipartisan support; and

WHEREAS, Although a majority of North Carolinians favor a nonpartisan redistricting process, Republican Senate leader Phil Berger has voiced his opposition to an independent commission to draw the new maps, thus leaving resort to the courts as the way for voters to challenge new maps; and

WHEREAS, The NC Legislature will draw its maps based on 2020 Census data prior to any commissions potentially being formed under The For the People Act; now therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the Orange County Democratic Party calls for the US Senate to pass the For the People Act (HR1 and S1) as soon as possible because the harm done by gerrymandered maps will last a decade or more; and

RESOLVED, That the Orange County Democratic Party calls on members of the NC Legislature to pass the Fair Maps Act, House Bill 437 which was recently filed in the NC General Assembly. This legislation proposes to add a referendum on the 2022 ballot that asks voters to approve the establishment of an independent redistricting commission consisting of an equal number of Republicans, Democrats, and Unaffiliated voters who would be tasked to draw maps that protect communities and are free from political influence; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Orange County Democratic Party calls on all North Carolinians who want fair maps and fair elections to become engaged in the redistricting process by petitioning their NC Senator and NC House member, advocating for fair maps by speaking out at hearings and community forums, supporting Voter Rights groups, and getting out the vote for Democratic judges as the legal fight may well go beyond the 2022 Elections.