



SPOKANE COUNTY REPUBLICAN PARTY RESOLUTION

Resolution to Prioritize Washington Workers, Strengthen the Washington Workforce, and Reform Foreign Worker Visa Programs

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: This resolution prioritizes qualified Washington and American workers by requiring employers to invest in domestic education, training, apprenticeships, and workforce-development partnerships before claiming labor shortages. It calls for stronger wage protections, transparency, enforcement, and penalties to prevent employment-based visa programs from being used to obtain cheaper labor or displace domestic workers.

WHEREAS, Washington workers deserve fair access to employment opportunities, competitive wages, safe working conditions, and meaningful opportunities for advancement; and

WHEREAS, Washington corporations and employers benefit from the infrastructure, education systems, public institutions, workforce, and communities supported by Washington taxpayers, and therefore have a responsibility to contribute to the development of the Washington workforce; and

WHEREAS, corporations and employers should not be permitted to claim that qualified Washington or American workers are unavailable while simultaneously failing to invest in the education, training, apprenticeships, and workforce development programs necessary to prepare workers for the jobs those employers seek to fill; and

WHEREAS, Washington's community colleges, universities, technical schools, apprenticeship programs, and vocational institutions provide essential pathways for residents to acquire the skills demanded by modern industries; and

WHEREAS, employers are in a unique position to identify emerging workforce needs and should work directly with Washington educational institutions to ensure that residents have access to training aligned with actual employment opportunities; and

WHEREAS, Washington is home to major industries including technology, aerospace, manufacturing, maritime, agriculture, healthcare, construction, engineering, energy, and skilled trades, and the long term economic strength of the state depends upon maintaining a highly skilled workforce capable of filling essential positions in these industries; and

WHEREAS, employment based visa programs can provide Washington and American businesses with specialized skills when qualified workers are genuinely unavailable, but such programs should not become a substitute for developing Washington and American talent or be used primarily to obtain lower cost labor; and

WHEREAS, the economic interests of Washington and the United States are best served by policies that encourage employers to recruit, train, retain, and promote workers already living in Washington and throughout the United States;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Spokane Republican Central Committee should require candidates to work toward adopting policies that:

1. **Prioritize qualified Washington and American workers** when employers are filling positions that can reasonably be performed by the domestic workforce.
2. **Establish a corporate workforce development responsibility.** Large corporations and employers that benefit substantially from the Washington market, infrastructure, public institutions, and government supported education should be encouraged or required, where appropriate, to make meaningful investments in developing the Washington workforce.
3. **Create partnerships with Washington community colleges and universities.** Corporations and employers should work directly with Washington educational institutions to identify the skills, credentials, and technical training required for available jobs and help establish programs that teach those skills to Washington students and workers.
4. **Build employer backed training pipelines.** Where companies claim that qualified workers are unavailable, employers should first demonstrate that they have made reasonable efforts to help create that workforce through internships, apprenticeships, scholarships, curriculum partnerships, certification programs, and other forms of domestic workforce development.
5. **Tie foreign worker requests to documented workforce shortages.** Employers should not be able to use a claimed shortage of skilled Washington or American workers as a justification for bringing in foreign labor when the employer has failed to make reasonable investments in developing the domestic workforce for those positions.
6. **Strengthen wage requirements for employment based visa programs** so that employers cannot use foreign worker programs primarily to obtain cheaper labor or undermine prevailing wages in Washington.
7. **Prevent displacement of Washington and American workers.** Employers should face meaningful penalties when they deliberately replace qualified domestic workers with lower cost foreign labor through misuse of employment based visa programs.
8. **Increase enforcement and auditing of employers participating in employment-based visa programs,** including investigations of wage violations, fraudulent job requirements, discriminatory hiring practices, and unlawful displacement of Washington or U.S. workers.
9. **Encourage regional workforce partnerships.** Corporations should be encouraged to establish long term partnerships with educational institutions and workforce-development organizations in the Washington communities where they operate, helping local residents obtain the specific skills required for employment in those industries.
10. **Require greater transparency.** Employers seeking significant numbers of employment-based visas should disclose relevant information concerning the positions being filled, compensation, domestic recruitment efforts, layoffs, and workforce development investments, subject to appropriate privacy protections.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that Washington corporations and employers should recognize that access to Washington's workforce, infrastructure, institutions, and markets comes with responsibilities to the communities and workers that sustain those resources. A company should not indefinitely rely upon foreign worker recruitment to fill positions while failing to invest in the education and training necessary to give Washington and American workers a genuine opportunity to perform those jobs.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that Washington should pursue policies that strengthen the state's workforce while remaining consistent with the broader interests of the United States, including maintaining a competitive economy, protecting American workers, supporting legitimate employers, and preserving narrowly tailored access to foreign talent when genuine and demonstrable workforce shortages exist.

(ACCOUNTABILITY STANDARD) BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that candidates and elected officials receiving Party endorsement shall, without exception, demonstrate consistent support for the American workers and the policies specified above; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that the objective of these policies is to establish a sustainable Washington workforce, supported by a strong American workforce, in which companies have a meaningful incentive to train, recruit, retain, and promote Washington and American workers first; foreign worker programs are reserved for legitimate and demonstrable needs; wages and working conditions are protected; and Washington communities receive a meaningful return from the economic activity they help support.