

## **Fairfax County Democratic Committee Resolution Regarding Voting Rights for Ex-Felons in Virginia**

**W**hereas, over 300,000 Virginians currently cannot vote because they have felony convictions, and their right to vote has not been restored by the Governor of Virginia,

**W**hereas, one out of every five African-American males in the Commonwealth of Virginia cannot vote because of the Virginia Constitutional provision prohibiting persons with felony convictions to vote unless restored by the Governor,

**W**hereas, only Virginia and Kentucky require an act of the Governor to restore rights instead of some form of automatic restoration which is practiced by the 48 other states,

**W**hereas, the Governor of Virginia has the sole authority to act on this matter,

**W**hereas, with a stroke of his pen the Governor by Executive Order could restore the right to vote for ex-felons who have completed their sentences,

**W**hereas, there are no clear standards for the restoration of voting rights, and no law dictating the process by which the Governor may choose to restore rights,

**W**hereas, the best way for persons who have served their sentences to be re-integrated into society is to give them all rights and responsibilities as a citizen, including most importantly the right to participate in the political process and to cast a ballot to elect their leaders,

**W**hereas, felon disenfranchisement is a relic of the Jim Crow era, instituted along with the poll tax and literacy tests explicitly to protect the white vote,

**W**hereas, numerous individuals and organizations throughout the Commonwealth have urged Governor Kaine to take action,

**T**herefore, be it resolved that the FCDC urges Governor Tim Kaine to issue an Executive Order restoring the vote for current ex-felons who have completed the terms of their sentences, and that the Committee urges all members to call the Governor's Office at 804-786-2211 to ask him to issue said Executive Order, before he leaves office on January 16<sup>th</sup>, 2010.

**Enacted by vote of the Committee this 5<sup>th</sup> day of January, 2010.**