

## **Resolution in support of fixing Washington's 3-strikes law**

WHEREAS approximately 73% of the convictions under Washington's 3-Strikes law are for crimes in the mid to low range of Washington's criminal seriousness scale at RCW 9.94A.515 (1);

WHEREAS Robbery 2, the most common 3-Strikes conviction, and Assault 2, another common 3-Strikes crime, are classified in the least serious quarter of criminal offenses at RCW 9.94A.515, carrying standard sentences of 3 months to 7 years;

WHEREAS Washington's 3-Strikes population is approximately 40% African American in comparison with a state population that is less than 4% African American; (1)

WHEREAS Washington's Sentencing Guidelines Commission recommended in 2001 removing Robbery 2 from the 3-Strikes list and examining under what circumstances, if any, should Assault 2 be treated as a strike, as the range of behaviors associated with Robbery 2 and, "probably" some instances of Assault 2 do not rise to the level of most serious offenses and that, specifically, in the case of Robbery 2, these behaviors pose "little risk of physical injury"; (2)

WHEREAS bills responding to the recommendations of the Sentencing Guidelines Commission have been in the state legislature since 2001;

THEREFORE the Whatcom county Democratic Central Committee calls for reform or repeal of Washington's 3-Strikes law.

*1.Persistent Offenders, Through June 2008, State of Washington, Sentencing Guidelines Commission.*

*2.Sentencing Reform Act Review, 2000/2001, State of Washington, Sentencing Guidelines Commission.*

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Adopted February 17, 2011, by the Whatcom County Democratic Central Committee, Bellingham, WA

Natalie McClendon  
Chair