

## MEMORANDUM

TO: Democratic Party of Virginia State Central Committee

FROM: Alfonso Lopez & Frank Leone

RE: **Party Plan Amendments – Central and Steering Committee**

DATE: Revised – September 3, 2010

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### INTRODUCTION

These proposed Party Plan amendments would make the changes set forth below to update the Party Plan and provide fair representation for Virginia Democrats on the Party's State Central and Steering Committees.

1. The first amendment would add as members of the Central Committee the General Assembly House and/or Senate Majority or Minority Leaders.
  - Currently, the House and Senate Caucus Chairs are members of the Central Committee as are the Speaker of the House and President Pro Tem of the Senate, if they are Democrats. The current House Minority Leader and Senate Minority leaders, however, are not members. As the party leaders of these bodies, they should be represented on the Central Committee.
2. Currently Constituency Groups under Section 4.20 are given a Central Committee seat; if they meet the criteria for a Caucus under Section 4.19, they may lose that seat. The second amendment clarifies that each caucus representative retains a seat on the Central Committee, unless they have a seat on Steering Committee.
  - This provision clarifies that all party Caucuses are entitled to one seat on the Central Committee (unless they have a seat on the Steering Committee). Thus Constituency Groups that become Caucuses would not lose a Central Committee seat.
3. The third amendment would set forth non-exclusive criteria for adding representatives of caucuses to the Steering.
  - This provision is offered as a streamlined revision of the proposal discussed at the June 2010 Central Committee meeting.
  - New section 5.8 sets forth non-exclusive criteria for consideration of the addition of Caucus representatives on the Steering Committee. First, to be eligible, the Caucus must be an approved Caucus under Party Plan Section 4.19, thus much of the detailed eligibility criteria that were previously set out will be subsumed in the Section 4.19 caucus approval process. Caucuses in good standing may be

considered under additional criteria, including representation of a large Democratic population, and a record of achievement, and DNC representation.

- The original proposal would also have amended Section 5.1 to add two of the Party's current Caucuses – the Democratic Latino Organization of Virginia and the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Caucus to the Steering Committee. This proposal does not make that change - any caucuses who are interested in joining the Steering Committee may present proposals for consideration at the next or other future Central Committee meetings.

## **PROPOSED PARTY PLAN AMENDMENTS**

### **Section 4.1: Membership**

There shall be a Democratic State Central Committee (herein the Central Committee) composed of twenty (20) members from each congressional district. In addition, the following persons shall be voting members of the Central Committee:

- ◆ the State chair;
- ◆ the vice-chair for organization (first vice-chair);
- ◆ the vice chair for rules (second vice-chair);
- ◆ the vice-chair for technology and communications;
- ◆ the vice-chair for finance;
- ◆ the vice-chair for outreach;
- ◆ the secretary and the treasurer of the Central Committee;
- ◆ the Virginia members of the Democratic National Committee elected by the State Convention, and any other member of the National Committee elected under the national charter and rules who resides in Virginia;
- ◆ the Democratic members of the United States Congress from Virginia;
- ◆ the Democratic Governor, Lieutenant Governor and Attorney General;
- ◆ the President Pro Tempore of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Delegates, provided they are Democrats;
- ◆ The Senate and House of Delegates Majority or Minority Leaders, provided they are Democrats;
- ◆ the chairs of the Democratic caucuses of the Senate and the House;
- ◆ the president, national committeeman and national committeewoman of the Virginia Young Democrats;
- ◆ the president and first vice-president of the Virginia Democratic Women's Caucus;
- ◆ the chair of the Association of Democratic Chairs;
- ◆ the chair of the Association of Democratic Elected Officials;
- ◆ the chair of the Virginia Young Democrats College Caucus;
- ◆ the chair of the Virginia Young Democrats Teen Caucus;
- ◆ the chair of the Virginia Young Democrats County/City Caucus; and
- ◆ Representatives from recognized caucuses identified pursuant to Section 4.10 and constituency group organizations as identified pursuant to Section 4.20.

In addition, those members of the General Assembly and those chairs of county and city committees who are elected as provided in Section 6.2 of this Plan will be voting members. All members of the Central Committee shall be members of their respective congressional district

committees.

#### **Section 4.19 Central Committee Caucuses**

Members of the Central Committee may form caucuses within the Central Committee. Such caucuses may provide an organizational focus for members of a constituency group who are members of the Central Committee; present issues and act as an advocate for members of the group within the Virginia Democratic Party; provide contacts to members of the public who are not yet active in party affairs; assist in the Democratic Party's commitment to outreach to members of the group and encourage them to participate in party affairs at the local, state and national levels; assist in the Democratic Party's commitment to encourage persons who are members of the group to register to vote and become informed about public issues; assist in the Democratic Party's efforts to energize and mobilize members of the group to vote for and support Democratic candidates; encourage the development of group members who may be candidates for public office; raise money to be used for outreach, party building and election activities; and provide a state contact for the Democratic National Committee and other national and state organizations.

Members of the Central Committee may organize recognized caucuses that shall: (1) be comprised of members of the Central Committee; (2) represent a minimum of three percent of the Central Committee general membership, with members from at least four Congressional Districts; (3) represent an identifiable constituency of the Democratic Party; (4) adopt bylaws that are consistent with the party plan, and that shall include (a) a statement of the purpose of the caucus, (b) membership qualifications that include an affirmative act by the Central Committee member to join the caucus, and (c) procedure for the regular election of officers; and (5) be approved by a majority present and voting at a Central Committee meeting. Notice of such vote shall be mailed to Central Committee members 10 days prior to the meeting.

Caucuses who do not have a representative on the Steering Committee pursuant to Section 5.1 shall have one representative on the Central Committee.

#### **Section 5.8 Steering Committee Caucus Representation**

The Central Committee may amend the Party Plan (pursuant to Section 4.16) to add a representative to the Steering Committee of a Caucus recognized under Section 4.19 that reflects inherent and/or immutable traits. In evaluating whether to provide representation to such a Caucus, the Central Committee may consider the following criteria: The caucus represents a constituency which constitutes a significant part of Virginia's population; the constituency has a proven record of supporting Democrats; the constituency is historically underrepresented in the party structure; the caucus is a longstanding group with a proven record of working hard to elect Democrats and build the Party; and the Caucus is represented on the DNC Executive Committee. If a Caucus with Steering Committee representation fails to maintain its status as a Caucus (under Section 4.19), its representative shall no longer be considered a voting member of the Steering Committee.