

# **BYLAWS OF THE NATIVE AMERICAN CAUCUS OF THE DOUGLAS COUNTY DEMOCRATIC PARTY**

## **Article I: Name**

### **Section 1: Official Name**

The name of the Caucus shall be the Native American Caucus of the Douglas County Democratic Party.

### **Section 2: Definition of Terms**

Throughout this document, the term “Native American” shall be understood to refer to any and all persons whose primary identity, or in the case of bi-racial or mixed-racial persons, one of whose primary identities, is as Native American, American Indian, or Indigenous, and who are either enrolled in any federal or state recognized tribes or are a descendent of tribal nations of the Western Hemisphere, whether the tribe is currently recognized by the U.S. or any state government or not. A certificate of tribal membership or of “blood quantum” shall neither be required nor requested by the NA Caucus of the DCDP at any time. Further, the NA Caucus shall not take any action or speak in any manner that perpetuates the assumption that the U.S. Government has any authority to define who is or is not a Native American or whether a tribe remains in existence.

## **Article II: Mission and Purpose**

### **Section 1: Mission Statement**

The Native American Caucus of the DCDP (NA Caucus) shall promote the involvement of Native Americans in the political process and in the activities of the Democratic Party at local, state, and national levels. Further, the Native American Caucus shall advocate for public policies which promote the needs and interests of the Native American community.

The NA Caucus recognizes the need for inclusive representation throughout the Democratic party and seeks to advance the highest principles of the Democratic party, as outlined in the state platform of the Nebraska Democratic Party and the county platform,.

The NA Caucus further endeavors to foster and maintain democratic procedures within the Democratic party at all levels; to support Democratic candidates of integrity, ability, and conviction, both for public office and for party positions; and to promote and encourage active participation by all Democrats in the conduct of their party and their community.

In races contested between multiple Democratic candidates, the NA Caucus shall never endorse one Democratic candidate over another, although it may endorse multiple

Democratic candidates in races in which a candidate of another party is also running. The NA Caucus shall not endorse any Republican, Nonpartisan, Independent, nor any other party's candidate in a race in which there is a Democratic candidate. The NA Caucus shall not be required to endorse a candidate in every race on any ballot. The NA Caucus shall not be required to endorse only NA candidates, but it shall be careful only to endorse candidates whose positions align with the best interests of Native American peoples. In order to assure that is the case, the NA Caucus may, but shall not be required to, appoint a special committee to interview candidates for a particular office.

## **Section 2: Statement of Purpose**

The Native American Caucus of the Douglas County Democratic Party shall seek to accomplish its mission in the following manner:

By promoting the involvement of Native Americans in the political process and the activities of the Democratic party at the local, state, and federal levels,

By recruiting and supporting Native Americans residing in Douglas County for both Public and Party offices,

By forming coalitions and identifying pertinent issues that are relevant for the Native American community,

By supporting the inclusion of Native Americans in the Democratic Party's leadership at the local, state, and national levels,

By developing countywide messaging that speaks to the needs, interests, and concerns of Native Americans within the Democratic Party,

By holding the Democratic Party and public officials at all levels accountable to the needs of the Native American community, and

By operating in conformity with the Constitution and Bylaws governing the Douglas County Democratic Party (DCCP) and the Nebraska Democratic Party (NDP).

## **Article III: Membership**

### **Section 1: Voting Membership**

Voting members in the Native American Caucus shall be restricted to Democrats currently registered to vote in Douglas County who self-identify as Native American, as defined in Article I, Section 2 of this document.

## **Section 2: Non-Voting Membership**

Persons who are Democrats residing in Douglas County and have both interest in and commitment to the concerns of Native American peoples will be welcome to become non-voting members in the Native American Caucus. Such non-voting members shall complete the same Membership Form as Voting Members and pay the same suggested dues, except they shall write “none” on the line specifying tribal identification.

## **Section 3: Dues and Membership Registration**

Both voting and non-voting members of the Native American Caucus shall complete a NA Caucus Membership form, and said form shall be retained by the Secretary. Dues of \$15 per year are recommended but, in accordance with the Rules of the DNC and the NDP, payment of dues is not required for membership. The Membership form shall contain typical contact information, plus Tribal Identity or Identities. Submitting a Membership form shall constitute permission for the NA Caucus to make contact with the NA Caucus member by means of any of the contact possibilities listed on the Membership form, including text messaging, when a mobile telephone number is provided and the line “ok to text” is checked.

## **Article IV: Officers and Committees**

### **Section 1: Officers**

By vote taken at a DCDP Convention meeting of the Native American Caucus there shall be elected a Chair, Vice Chair (of opposite gender from the Chair), Secretary, and Treasurer. In addition, the Chair shall appoint a qualified Parliamentarian. Elected officers shall be current voting members of the NA Caucus. Efforts shall be made to keep the Officers tribally diverse.

### **Section 2: Committees**

The Native American Caucus shall have committees to carry out duties and functions deemed necessary for the Native American Caucus. The Chair shall nominate the committee chair of each committee, for approval by a majority vote of the Executive Committee. Voting members of the Executive Committee (EC) shall be the four elected officers of the NA Caucus. Committee chairs shall serve on the Executive Committee as nonvoting members of the EC. Executive Committee meetings and all committee meetings shall be subject to the Nebraska Open Meetings Act, except when a majority vote is taken that the Committee needs to meet in “Executive Session.” Chairs shall be voting members of the Native American Caucus and must be willing to attend Caucus meetings each month and work with other Native American Caucus members and officers to complete goals and objectives set forth by the Caucus. The committees of the Caucus may consist of, but are not limited to, the following committees:

Executive Committee: Shall set the agenda of Caucus meetings and act on behalf of the Caucus between regular meetings;

Revenue Committee: Shall advise the Caucus Treasurer on fiscal issues, draft a finance plan, and conduct fundraising activities;

Policy/Platform Committee: Shall keep the Caucus informed of issues relevant to Native Americans by tracking legislation and media articles/videos and shall draft policy statements to be approved by the Caucus;

Outreach/Recruitment Committee: Shall reach out to the Native American Community of Douglas County for Caucus membership and candidates for public office.

Education Committee: Shall plan and conduct educational events in the community both for Native Americans and for the general public concerning Native American issues, history, culture, and other matters of interest.

## **Article V: Officer Functions**

### **Section 1: The Chair**

The Chair shall preside over all Native American Caucus membership meetings and serve as the NA Caucus representative on the DCDP Central Committee. The Chair shall coordinate the activities of the NA Caucus and have authority to call meetings when necessary, to create committees, to appoint members to those committees, and to fill vacancies of chairs in committees. Only the Chair or a person appointed by the Chair has the authority to speak on behalf of the DCDP NA Caucus.

### **Section 2: The Vice Chair**

The Vice Chair shall serve as Chair in the absence of the elected Chair. Should a vacancy occur in the position of Chair, the Vice Chair will automatically become Chair until the next County Convention. The Vice Chair shall have whatever additional duties the Chair shall request.

### **Section 3: Secretary**

The Secretary shall be responsible for official communications to the Native American Caucus general membership and the executive committee at the direction of the Chair. The secretary shall be responsible for direct correspondence on behalf of the Native American Caucus, maintain the official Native American Caucus membership rolls, update and maintain the Native American Caucus bylaws, and conduct mailings, phone calls and email communications. The secretary shall take minutes of all meetings and official conference calls.

### **Section 4: Treasurer**

The Treasurer shall maintain the financial records of the Native American Caucus. It is recommended that the Treasurer be bonded.

### **Section 5: Parliamentarian**

The Parliamentarian shall ensure that proper order is maintained at all Native American Caucus meetings and shall be keeper of the updated copy of Robert Rules of Order and the Nebraska Democratic Party and Douglas County Democratic Party rules. If the Parliamentarian is eligible to be a Voting Member of the NA Caucus, he or she shall vote only in order to break a tie vote.

### **Section 6: Filling Vacancies in NA Caucus Offices**

In the event that one of the offices of the NA Caucus becomes empty, other than the Chair's position being filled by the Vice Chair through vacancy, the entire membership of the Caucus shall be notified of the vacancy, and a Special Election shall be held at the next official Caucus meeting, provided at least two weeks notice of the vacancy has been sent to the Caucus membership.

### **Article VI: Meetings**

Official meeting quorum shall be at least 1/3 of total Caucus membership. The most recent edition of Robert Rules of Order shall govern the Native American Caucus meetings except when inconsistent with Nebraska Democratic Party or Douglas County Constitution or Bylaws. When voting on matters which result in serious division within the Caucus membership, the Chair may declare that a quorum of at least 1/3 of the voting membership be required. If a question of what "serious division" means is raised, the Executive Committee shall make a decision, which shall be binding on the issue.

### **Article VII: Amendments**

These Bylaws may be amended by majority vote at any DCDP County Convention NA Caucus meeting or by 2/3 vote of the membership at any official NA Caucus meeting, provided the entire NA Caucus membership has been advised of the proposed change at least two weeks prior to the meeting in which the change shall be presented for vote. Any amendment adopted at a Native American Caucus meeting between County Conventions must be ratified by a majority vote of the NA Caucus meeting at the next County Convention or the amendment will become null and void.