

## **Resolution in Support of Referendum on SB1431**

**Whereas** the Arizona House of Representatives and Senate passed and Gov. Doug Ducey signed SB1431, the ESA voucher expansion bill, and;

**Whereas**, Arizona ranks last in the nation for teacher pay, (Source: Arizona Republic), ranks 48th for public school funding and in student achievement outcomes (Source: KTAR), is facing an unprecedented teacher shortage with more than 2,200 classrooms across the state without a teacher (Source: Arizona School Personnel Administrators Association survey, September 2016), low teacher pay remains central to the teacher recruitment and retention crisis (Source: Arizona Education News) and vouchers pull millions from our already underfunded public schools thus worsening the classroom crisis. (Source: Arizona Republic), and;

**Whereas**, a well-educated workforce is key to state prosperity. States that increase the level of education of their workforce experience higher overall wages. (Source: Economic Policy Institute), and;

**Whereas**, vouchers are predicted to redirect millions in taxpayer funds from the public education budget to any Arizona family to pay for K-12 private school tuition, (including religious schools) online schools, or even home schooling. (Source: Arizona Republic and 95% of Arizona families choose public schools. (Source: Ballotpedia), and;

**Whereas**, the Arizona Constitution specifically mandates a “general and uniform public school system” as the duty of the state (Source: Arizona Constitution, Article XI, Section 1) and Arizona’s Constitution also clearly states that public funds must remain separate from religion: “No public money or property shall be appropriated for or applied to any religious worship, exercise, or instruction, or to the support of any religious establishment.” (Source: Arizona Constitution, Article II, Section 12).

**Therefore, be it resolved**, that the Arizona Democratic Party supports the referendum of SB1431 and encourages its members to circulate and sign the referendum petitions.

Submitted by the Arizona Democratic Party Resolutions Committee