

10 **A RESOLUTION CONCERNING VOTING IN AMERICA**

20 **WHEREAS:** There is considerable amount of evidence that shows that voting on
30 Tuesday, which is a workday, is inconvenient for many voters.
40 However, allowing weekend (Saturday and Sunday) voting would be
50 significant in increasing voter turn out and in strengthening American
60 democracy, and;

70 **WHEREAS:** Voting on Tuesday is a staple of American life that most of us take for
80 granted. However, holding national elections on Tuesdays is not required
90 by the U.S. Constitution. This Election Day, “the Tuesday after the first
100 Monday of November,” was in fact established in 1845 by federal law. In
120 those years, America was primarily agrarian nation, Tuesday was a
130 convenient day for most eligible voters (rural workers and land-owning
140 gentry) to journey to the county seat, vote, and journey back home- a trek
150 that could take up to three days. Congress did not want this travel to
160 conflict with days of religious observance, which left Tuesday and
170 Wednesday. Wednesday was market day. So: Tuesday, and;

180 **WHEREAS:** Today, we live in different times. America is an urban nation, with nearly
190 80% of Americans living in metropolitan areas. Many Americans work
200 longer hours and struggle the demands of juggling work, child care, and
210 other responsibilities. According to the most recent US census data,
220 “too busy/scheduling conflicts” was the most cited reason for not voting
230 and;

220 **WHEREAS:** There are too few Americans participating in elections. According to the
230 International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, from 1945
240 to 2004 voting turnout in the U.S. ranked 139th of 171 countries. Turnout
250 rate of about 50 percent compares to the 73 percent average for the 36
260 established democracies (countries that have been democracies for over 20
270 years and have a population of at least one-quarter million people), and;

280 **WHEREAS:** According to a national poll conducted by Tarranc Group and Snell Perry,
290 94% of adults agree that voting should be as convenient as possible.
300 The same poll showed that 62% of adults favor legislation making it
310 easier to vote in federal elections, and;

320 **WHEREAS:** According to Senator Herb Kohl “weekend voting will not solve all of this democracy’s
330 problem, but it is a commonsense approach for adapting this grand democratic
340 experiment of the 18th century to the American lifestyle of the 21st century.” and;

350 **WHEREAS:** US Senate bill 144 “The Weekend Voting Act”-amends the federal law to
360 establish the first Saturday and Sunday after the first Friday in
370 November.” The bill is in the first stage of the legislative process.

380 **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:** That the Maryland Student Legislature urges the US
390 Congress and Senate to pass the Weekend Voting Act before the next
400 election cycle.

410 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:** That the Maryland Student Legislature urge President Bush
420 to sign the act into law.

430 **MANDATES:** Senator Harry Reid, Majority Leader of the Senate

440 Senator Mitch McConnell, Minority Leader of the Senate
450 Senator Herb Kohl
450 Representative Nancy Pelosi, Speaker of the House
460 President George Bush

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