

DAKOTA RURAL ACTION RESOLUTIONS 2022

Purpose of DRA Resolutions:

These resolutions are a guiding document for the board of directors. The board can consult the resolutions when making decisions. However board decisions are not restricted by the resolutions. In addition the resolutions serve as a historical document and an educational document for members and potential members.

Process for Resolutions introduced at the Annual Meeting:

Resolutions introduced at the Annual meeting will be read and tabled until next year's annual meeting. Resolutions can be taken from the table and considered with a 2/3rds vote of the members present.

Lithium Mining - (2022)

WHEREAS, numerous operators are exploring for lithium -- or already mining for lithium -- in the Black Hills; and

WHEREAS, lithium mining and processing scar the land, evict wildlife, and contaminate air and water; and

WHEREAS, human health is threatened by this volatile, toxic substance; and

WHEREAS, South Dakota state law does not regulate lithium mining similarly to other hard rock mining; and

WHEREAS, regulation of lithium mining is inadequate to protect the Black Hills and its population from lithium mining;
now

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, Dakota Rural Action opposes lithium mining and processing in the Black Hills; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED Dakota Rural Action supports the classification and regulation of lithium mining in the same manner as other hard rock mining.

A Resolution Against the Unconstitutional Use of Eminent Domain (2022)

WHEREAS: The power of eminent domain laid out in the fifth amendment of the U.S. Constitution, adopted by the state of South Dakota, envisions the taking of private property only for *public use* with fair compensation, by the duly established arms of government; and

WHEREAS: Many social and economic advances have been made through the appropriate use of eminent domain including highways, rural water, electric lines, and tele-communications infrastructure; and

WHEREAS: Attempts to bend the definitions and rules surrounding eminent domain by exploitative corporations in state and federal courts have successfully opened this sacred power to many projects that in no reasonable way can be claimed to be 'public use'; and

WHEREAS: South Dakota boasts some of the worst laws surrounding the process by which eminent domain is accessed by private corporations, which have been exploited by many projects in recent years including the Dakota Access Pipeline and the Keystone XL pipeline, and most recently is being attempted by new hazardous carbon dioxide pipelines; and

WHEREAS: South Dakota has no process to determine the worthiness of project's claim to eminent domain, or for projects to bear the burden of proof that they meet the constitutional requirements of eminent domain; and

WHEREAS: Dakota Rural Action has stood and continues to stand in solidarity with the tribes, communities, and landowners being harassed and impacted by such exploitative uses of eminent domain

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED: That Dakota Rural Action oppose the use of eminent domain by private companies that generate private profits; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: That Dakota Rural Action calls upon elected officials to support legislative amendments to existing codified law that promote eminent domain reform resulting in the protection of South Dakotan lands and people from corporate exploitation of existing statutes; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: That Dakota Rural Action will support and advance such legislative solutions through education, outreach, collaboration, and lobbying efforts.

A RESOLUTION TO REJECT CARBON CAPTURE, UTILIZATION AND STORAGE TECHNOLOGY AS A FALSE CLIMATE SOLUTION AND THREAT TO SOUTH DAKOTA’S PEOPLE AND LANDS

WHEREAS: Carbon Capture, Utilization and Storage (CCUS) technologies were originally developed for the purpose of increasing oil production in depleted oil fields through the practice called Enhanced Oil Recovery (EOR); and

WHEREAS: 95% of carbon dioxide currently captured through CCUS is utilized in EOR, and the vast majority of CCUS infrastructure exists within oil fields; and

WHEREAS: Big Oil lobbyists and interest groups have been pushing for federal funding of CCUS developments for the past decades in order to create a cheap, federally subsidized carbon dioxide market in order to make EOR financially viable; and

WHEREAS: These efforts have successfully led to the creation of the federal 45Q tax credit program, which the Inflation Reduction Act of 2022 expanded by 70%, resulting in the current \$80 tax credit per metric ton of carbon dioxide that is geologically sequestered and \$65 tax credit per metric ton of carbon dioxide that is utilized in EOR. Furthermore, this tax credit is set up to pay the polluter with no incentive to actually reduce CO2 emissions; and

WHEREAS: Just as with previous fracking technologies, CCUS is now being marketed and greenwashed as a technological solution to reduce the effects of atmospheric emissions on climate change, even though adding carbon capture technology takes more energy than the original facility requires, thereby increasing the net CO2 production; and

WHEREAS: The entire tax credit program will actually result in funneling billions of dollars annually into the hands of the very entities that are currently responsible for high emissions, all the while extending a life-line to the fossil fuel industry by subsidizing further oil production; and

WHEREAS: These public dollars will therefore not be available to fund the buildout of a renewable energy grid and other proven solutions to reducing emissions, but will further bind us to fossil fuel based infrastructure and the multinational corporations which have predominantly contributed to the total carbon emissions released into the atmosphere while also funding intentional misinformation campaigns regarding the impact of emissions on the environment; and

WHEREAS: Nearly all large CCUS projects in the world have failed or been closed due to the inability to actually capture the projected quantities of emissions and for the failure to meet financial viability; and

WHEREAS: CCUS infrastructure poses significant threats to the lives and livelihoods of the people, communities, and environment where it is proposed; and

WHEREAS: CCUS infrastructure projects are claiming a right to the power of eminent domain to build their projects, despite the fact that they will be built as private, for-profit pipelines against the will of the people who live in the path of the projects;

NOW, BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED: That Dakota Rural Action declares CCUS as a false climate solution being promoted as a way to further beholden our communities and nation to our existing energy infrastructure; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: That Dakota Rural Action calls upon state and federal officials to reject CCUS technologies and the private interests that champion them, and to prioritize true solutions that can reduce emissions

including but not limited to: the creation of a renewable energy grid and biological solutions in the form of environmental revitalization and agriculturally-based carbon sequestration; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: That Dakota Rural Action opposes the buildout of carbon capture and transportation infrastructure in South Dakota which puts our lands and people at risk, abuses the power of eminent domain, and fails to meaningfully reduce carbon emissions while further subsidizing and reinforcing existing emitting.

Agriculture & Local Foods

LIVESTOCK CONCENTRATION AND OPEN MARKETS (adopted 2003, amended 2010, 2011, 2021, 2022)

WHEREAS, in 1919 the Federal Trade Commission declared that the "Big Five" Packers were "in the position to monopolize all the nation's food supply"; by 1920 the "Big Five" controlled roughly two thirds of cattle slaughter; and

WHEREAS, the Packers & Stockyards Act of 1921 was enacted to strengthen existing antitrust laws and to prevent these or other companies from monopolizing the meat industry; and

WHEREAS, in 1983 the top four slaughterers had approximately 36% of the fed steer and heifer market, in 1993 the top four slaughterers controlled approximately 70% and now control over 85%; and

WHEREAS, a few major corporations have prominent livestock feeding operations and are huge grain processors, and they thereby manipulate the prices paid to producers, and they influence prices paid by consumers; and

WHEREAS, captive supply levels continue to increase; and the Packers and Stockyards Act remains unenforced, thus forcing smaller packing firms out of business and preventing the emergence of new meat processing ventures; and

WHEREAS, the COVID-19 pandemic broadly illuminated the corporate domination of our agriculture and food system, leading to massive gaps between what the consumer is paying and what producers receive for their cattle. Further highlighting the dangers inherent in our current food system; and

WHEREAS, the proposed changes will not restrict the use of forward contracts, premium branded products or independent marketing agreements; and

WHEREAS, Dakota Rural Action's Petition for Rulemaking was published in the Federal Register and opened it up for comment in January, 1997, resulting in over 1,700 comments of support nation-wide, including 290 comments from South Dakota; now

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Dakota Rural Action call on the US Secretary of Agriculture, the US Assistant Secretary, and the Grain Inspectors Packers and Stockyards Administration Administrator, to institute immediately the following administrative changes:

1. Prohibit packers from procuring livestock for slaughter through the use of a forward contract, unless the contract contains a firm base price that can be equated to a fixed dollar amount on the day the contract is signed, and the forward contract is offered or bid in an open, public manner;
2. Prohibit packers from owning and feeding livestock, unless the livestock are sold for slaughter in an open, public market; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Dakota Rural Action strongly support and continue to urge the US Secretary of Agriculture and the U.S. Justice Department to relentlessly pursue investigation of concentration in the livestock packing industry, enforcement of the laws that preserve and protect us from the monopolization and to stop further mergers of food industry companies that would expand their monopolization of our food system; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Dakota Rural Action urge concrete action by public officials to ensure that a safe and affordable meat supply is available to consumers; that fair and profitable prices are paid to producers; and that open, competitive markets are restored; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a portion of the check off money collected to promote beef be repurposed and instead used to help pay for the enforcement of the Packers and Stockyards Act; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Dakota Rural Action formally request that South Dakota's congressional delegation and the United States Justice Department undertake an investigation into the pricing and labeling practices of the commodities industry and take appropriate action to insure that industry is operating in full compliance with all antitrust laws currently in effect.

SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE (adopted 2003, amended 2010, 2013, 2017, 2022)

WHEREAS, Sustainable Agriculture is dedicated to maintaining the productivity of the community of agriculture, environmental quality, ecological functions and socioeconomic improvements for rural communities; and

WHEREAS, Sustainable Agriculture offers a viable option for smaller diversified farms, ranches and food producers struggling in the current drive towards huge specialized farms; and

WHEREAS, there are health hazards to farm workers employed at CAFO's, and in large commercial vegetable fields and orchards and

WHEREAS, the Center for Disease Control and Prevention has specifically identified the contribution made by confined animal feeding operations to the crisis of antibiotic resistant pathogens in human medicine, and current FDA rules are insufficiently restrictive of the heavy use of antibiotics in these operations; and

WHEREAS, these smaller diversified farms hold tremendous value for our rural communities, our state, and our country; and

WHEREAS, crops and animals grown under organic conditions, which is one portion of Sustainable Agriculture, are the fastest growing segment in food sales; and

WHEREAS, industrial scale agriculture uses chemicals and techniques which negatively impact the environment and, in the case of huge industrial animal production, can have devastating environmental effects; and

WHEREAS, recognizing Concentrated Animal Feeding Operation (CAFO) development is occurring in SD; and

WHEREAS, there are growing concerns about the safety and health of our food supply including concerns about Genetically Modified Organisms, lax border and import inspections, and reductions on the effectiveness of USDA food

inspections; and

WHEREAS consumers and Sustainable Agriculture practitioners are exploring new marketing and production methods largely without state or federal support; now

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Dakota Rural Action support sustainable agriculture legislation that

1. Encourages research to support interdisciplinary science;
2. Encourages extension programs to deliver needed information to farmers, retailers, and consumers;
3. Creates marketing policies that encourage local and regional food systems and markets;
4. Offers subsidy programs which ensure safety nets for farmers, insure the protect of the environment and farmworkers' health, and transitions to more sustainable practices; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Dakota Rural Action calls upon the Department of Environment and Natural Resources to revise and renew its general permit regulating CAFO development in order to be in compliance with the Clean Water Act which is mandated and enforced by the Environmental Protection Agency.

MANDATORY ANIMAL IDENTIFICATION - formerly the National Animal Identification System (NAIS) - currently referred to as Animal Disease Traceability Framework (adopted 2003, amended 2005 and 2008, 2009, 2010, 2018, 2022)

WHEREAS, Dakota Rural Action supports mandatory country-of-origin labeling, which was signed into law in the 2002 Farm Bill, and required that only meat that has been born, raised and processed in the United States can be labeled as U.S. product; and

WHEREAS, Dakota Rural Action does not support mandatory animal identification for the domestic herd; and

WHEREAS, There is no longer a specific mandatory animal identification proposal, the industry and administration still attempt to move closer to this goal, and

WHEREAS, Dakota Rural Action has concerns about the expense to producers of implementing a traceability framework; and

WHEREAS, Dakota Rural Action has concerns about access to the information collected by a traceability framework and whether that information could be used by the meat packing industry to further manipulate the livestock market; and

WHEREAS, Dakota Rural Action has concerns about producer liability and does not want meat packers or retailers foisting their violations back onto the producer; now

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that Dakota Rural Action call on Congress to reject any legislation requiring mandatory animal identification of the domestic herd; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the US Department of Agriculture scrutinize any proposals resembling national animal identification to insure it puts the interest of independent livestock producers and consumers first, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, if a mandatory national identification program ever comes into existence, all livestock,

whether imported or domestic, be identified and traced; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, if mandatory animal identification ever comes into existence that it be controlled and administered by each state's Animal Industry Board in accordance with the adopted federal regulations rather than by a private administrator; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Animal Industry Board will release information only for confirmed cases when an animal health problem arises necessitating an animal to be traced to its source.

SODSAVER RESOLUTION (adopted 2007, amended 2010)

WHEREAS, remaining grassland without a cropping history is a natural ecosystem that sustains healthy populations of wildlife, provides for beneficial livestock grazing, prevents soil erosion, protects water quality, and stability to the rural economy; and

WHEREAS, grassland without a cropping history is generally not as suitable for crop production as are historically cropped areas; and

WHEREAS, the ranching and recreational opportunities associated with grassland without a cropping history provide economic diversity such as grazing, hay, seed stock hunting, and tourism income and thus provide diversity and stability to the rural economy; and

WHEREAS, public funds are used to compensate crop losses, bolster grain prices, and fund conservation programs on recently converted grassland, creating an incentive for farmers to convert native grassland without consideration of the environmental and economic impact, thus creating additional expenses for taxpayers who ultimately fund these incentives; and

WHEREAS, crop insurance subsidy and disaster payments significantly reduce financial risk for converting grassland without a cropping history, resulting in inflated land prices and creating an economic disadvantage to potential property owners who wish to manage grassland; now

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Dakota Rural Action oppose the conversion of grassland without a cropping history into any form of conventional or non-conventional crop-based agriculture and encourage the sustainable management of remaining grassland without a cropping history as rangeland and wildlife habitat; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Dakota Rural Action support a federal Sodsaver provision which disallows the payment of farm subsidies, crop insurance subsidies, and/or federal or state disaster relief for the financial assurance of crops planted on grassland without a cropping history converted after January 1, 2011.

SUPPORT FOR LOCAL FOOD PRODUCTION AND DIRECT MARKETING (adopted 2008, 2017, 2022)

WHEREAS, available agricultural sector in South Dakota represents part of a secure regional food supply, which leads to energy and economic efficiencies; and

WHEREAS, the general public is increasingly interested in locally produced food; and

WHEREAS, locally raised and marketed meat, Community Supported Agriculture Farms, Farmers Market and Farm to School are a few of the local strategies offering profit potential and economic opportunity for South Dakota producers; and

WHEREAS, meat, produce, eggs, milk, fruit, and honey raised on South Dakota farms have an excellent reputation for quality and flavor; and

WHEREAS, work still needs to be done to help producers find local markets for their products; and

WHEREAS, for years South Dakota has experienced a drop in the number of farmers; and

WHEREAS, raising meats, fruits, vegetables, and dairy products as close as possible to the kitchens of the end-user reduces the carbon footprint of the entire food system; now

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Dakota Rural Action work to advance policies that

1. Assure the continuance of a safe, local food supply;
2. Maintain the South Dakota meat inspection service's "at least equal to" status with the federal government's USDA food safety inspection service;
3. Provide options for direct marketing between consumers and food producers;
4. Support policies and programs helping beginning and transitional farmers learn and develop the skills they need to be sustainable;
5. Support policies and programs helping establish unique marketing opportunities for producers who are focused upon the local market;
6. Provide support for producers and school districts for Farm to School programs.

SUPPORT FOR SOUTH DAKOTA FARMERS TO PRODUCE UNPASTEURIZED WHOLE MILK AND MARKET VALUE-ADDED UNPASTEURIZED WHOLE MILK PRODUCTS (adopted 2010, amended 2013)

WHEREAS, in spite of a severe drop in the number of dairy farmers in South Dakota, a viable raw dairy milk sector in South Dakota represents part of a secure regional food supply, which leads to energy and economic efficiencies; and

WHEREAS, the general public is increasingly interested in raw milk and products made from raw milk, including but not limited to cream, soft and hard cheeses aged 60 days or less, yogurt, and kefir; and there is a need for new producers to provide products; and

WHEREAS, legislation passed in the 2010 South Dakota state legislative session legalized the production and sale of raw milk only, meaning South Dakota state law does not allow the production and sale of raw milk products which are economically important value-added products; and

WHEREAS, locally raised and marketed raw milk and raw milk products offer profit potential and economic opportunity for South Dakota producers; and

WHEREAS the passage of SB 45 in 2015 legalized the sale of one raw milk product, raw cream intended for human consumption, and

WHEREAS, raw milk and raw milk products produced on South Dakota farms have an excellent reputation for quality and flavor; and

WHEREAS, work still needs to be done to help producers find local markets for their products, specifically retail outlets at which to sell raw milk and raw milk products; and

WHEREAS, producing raw milk and raw milk products as close as possible to the kitchens of the end-user reduces the carbon footprint of the entire food system; and

WHEREAS, prior to SB 45's passage in 2015, Manufacture Grade Milk was the only recognized grade of unpasteurized whole milk by the South Dakota Department of Agriculture which is generically referred to as "raw milk", "whole milk" and "grade B Milk"; and

WHEREAS, prior to SB 45's passage in 2015, the sale of Manufacture Grade Milk was allowed in South Dakota on a producer to consumer direct basis only; and

WHEREAS, SB 45 passed the legislature and was signed by Governor Dennis Daugaard resulting in the achievement of Dakota Rural Action's goal of creating a new category of milk referred to as "Raw Milk for Human Consumption."; and

WHEREAS, accompanying regulations were adopted in 2015 shortly after SB 45 was signed into law; now

THEREFORE be it resolved that Dakota Rural Action encourage and work with the state of South Dakota to create a state mandated Education Program that benefits raw dairy producers and consumers; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Dakota Rural Action work to advance policies that

1. Assure the continuance of a safe, local food supply including Unpasteurized Whole Milk and Unpasteurized Whole Milk products;
2. Maintain the South Dakota dairy farm inspection service's "at least equal to" status with the federal government's FDA's Pasteurized Milk Ordinance;
3. Provide options for direct marketing between consumers and Unpasteurized Whole Milk producers, and also retail outlets for producers;
4. Help beginning and transitional Unpasteurized Whole Milk producers learn and develop the skills they need to be sustainable;
5. Establish marketing opportunities for producers who focus on the local market.

TRANSGENIC CROPS (amended 2011, 2022)

WHEREAS, Transgenic (Genetically Modified Organisms GMO) have become the standard in conventional agriculture, and

WHEREAS, GMO's have contributed to the concentration in agriculture, livestock and food production, and

WHEREAS, Monsanto and other GMO seed companies have gained control of over 80% of the corn and soybeans grown in the United States through the use of restrictive licenses, and

WHEREAS, In 2020, the top four corporations, Bayer (formerly Monsanto), Corteva (formerly DuPont), Syngenta (part of ChemChina), and Limagrain together controlled 50% of the global seed market, with Bayer and Corteva alone claiming roughly 40%. And when it comes to genetic traits, this control is even more pronounced: Bayer controls 98% of trait markers for herbicide-resistant soybeans, and 79% of trait markers for herbicide-resistant corn, and

WHEREAS, this represents a vast experiment with our worldwide food supply, now

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Dakota Rural Action call on the US Government to become much more cautious in the licensing of new GMO plants and animals and consider the broad impacts of the expansion of these agricultural technologies, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Dakota Rural Action calls for the clear labeling of foods containing genetically modified materials and public education to assist consumers in making informed food choices.

FARM POLICY (2002, Amended 2016)

WHEREAS, grain and livestock producers are being driven off the land because our nation's agriculture policy is serving big agribusiness interests at the expense of family farmers, taxpayers, and the environment; and

WHEREAS, concentration of corporate power has reached a point that government is the only entity powerful enough to challenge the complete take-over of this nation's food system; now

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Dakota Rural Action call on Congress to include in current and future farm bills the following:

1. Increase market prices to producers by setting a floor price or loan rate at farmer's cost of production plus a profit that provides for an average family living;
2. Develop a mechanism that balances supply with demand, resulting in a stable food system;
3. Extend commodity loans from nine to eighteen months;
4. Re-establish a farmer-owned grain reserve with storage payments at the commercial rate;
5. Ban ownership, control or feeding of livestock by packers for more than 14 days prior to slaughter;
6. Require mandatory price reporting of livestock and grain sales;
7. Require country of origin labeling for livestock born, raised and slaughtered in the US;
8. Prohibit price discrimination and formula pricing in livestock markets;
9. Provide guaranteed fairness for farmers involved in contracts with packers and processors;
10. Provide bargaining rights for contract farmers;
11. Expand the Packers and Stockyards Act's anti-trust provisions to cover other aspects of agriculture;
12. Expand USDA authority to review, investigate and require modification of agribusiness mergers;
13. Require inspection and certification of imported agricultural products to ensure that such products meet standards at least equivalent to US standards for food safety, environmental, and worker protection.
14. Payment limitations.

CORPORATE FARMING (adopted 2003, 2010, 2018)

WHEREAS, South Dakotans place a priority on prosperous rural communities, clean environment, and viable family farms; and

WHEREAS, the South Dakota Family Farm Act was enacted in 1973 to preserve family farms and prohibit non-family corporate farming, and a vote of the people in 1988 strengthened this act by prohibiting non-family corporate

breeding-to-finish hog facilities from operating with in South Dakota; and

WHEREAS, the will of South Dakotans to prevent non-family farm corporations from operating in South Dakota [was affirmed in 1998 with the passage of Article XVII, Sections 21-24 of the South Dakota Constitution (commonly known as Amendment E)]; and

WHEREAS, even though Amendment E was subsequently overturned by the US Court of Appeals, the will of the people represented by the vote remains; and

WHEREAS, there are political and economic forces attempting to do away with South Dakota's limits on corporate farming; and

WHEREAS, family farming has been the heritage and backbone of South Dakota agriculture since statehood; and

WHEREAS, family farming combines three requirements of private enterprise (labor, management and capital) to promote economic viability for rural communities; and

WHEREAS, non-family corporations are formed to reduce or eliminate risk and individual responsibility; and

WHEREAS, certain agricultural corporations are threatening rural farm families through vertical integration, economic concentration, and environmental pollution; and

WHEREAS, there continue to be attempts by non-family farm corporations to locate concentrated animal feeding operations in South Dakota; and

WHEREAS, livestock feeding is an important form of agricultural development in South Dakota, so long as ownership, operation and control of feeding operations benefit South Dakota's family farm livestock producers; and

WHEREAS, the vision and purpose of South Dakota agriculture should be the viable future of family farming; and

WHEREAS, that vision must come from grassroots leadership; now

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that DRA opposes measures that will allow artificial entities (limited liability companies) to use the corporate veil to reduce or eliminate individual responsibility for ventures into production agriculture in South Dakota.

POLLINATORS – (2016)

WHEREAS, South Dakota routinely ranks in the top five honey producing states in the United States, produces many crops that rely on pollination by insects, and has lost approximately 40% of colonies per year since 2012-13 including losses of more than 30% of colonies 5 of the last 6 years contributing to millions of dollars of lost revenue; and

WHEREAS, neonicotinoid insecticides have been linked to bee declines in England in a study published in Nature Communications in August 2016, as well as numerous other causes; and

WHEREAS, seeds treated with neonicotinoid insecticides are commonly used in South Dakota; and

WHEREAS, the 2015-2016 Monarch butterfly population overwintering in Mexico was estimated at 30% below the

long-term average, and

WHEREAS, the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, formed by the United Nations, synthesized results from current research worldwide and have found that the decline of pollinator populations pose a threat to the world's food supply; now

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Dakota Rural Action promote the welfare of pollinators throughout the state through education; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DRA promote laws at the local, state, and national level that create an environment that supports pollinators; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DRA promote farming practices that encourage wild pollinator populations.

Economics & Trade

SOUTH DAKOTA'S MINIMUM WAGE (Amended 2016, 2018)

WHEREAS, a living wage would help South Dakota's workers out of poverty; and

WHEREAS, minimum wage workers are grossly underpaid for the value of their work; and

WHEREAS, increasing the minimum wage can spur rural, low income economies through increased consumption that can increase employment; now

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Dakota Rural Action supports a living wage.

INTERSTATE SHIPMENT OF STATE INSPECTED MEAT AND POULTRY

WHEREAS, because the safety of food and the health of consumers is paramount, it is essential to pass regulations to eliminate burdens on commerce posed by unwholesome, adulterated, improperly marked, mislabeled and improperly packaged meat and poultry products; and

WHEREAS, many states including South Dakota, already have meat inspection practices established for small packing plants and have a good track record of setting up inspection programs at considerably less cost than the USDA in these small plants; and

WHEREAS, the Federal Government allows establishments in State meat or poultry inspection programs to receive Federal inspection from State inspectors, and ship products in interstate commerce; now

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Dakota Rural Action encourage USDA to implement the provisions and programs laid out in the 2008 Farm Bill related to interstate shipment of meat as soon as possible and before the next Farm Bill is enacted; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DRA calls on the SD Congressional delegation to preserve funding for enactment and

enforcement of those interstate shipment of meat provisions in the federal budget and work to strengthen them in the upcoming Farm Bill; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Dakota Rural Action believe that any Federal rule-making implementation and/or state legislative solution should be designed to

1. Provide for interstate shipment of meat and poultry products produced at establishments under State inspection;
2. Improve food safety and consumer confidence in the food supply;
3. Increase the viability of small meat and poultry establishments;
4. Insure the viability of state meat and poultry inspection programs;
5. Provide for seamless meat and poultry inspection programs in the United States; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Dakota Rural Action support the establishment of a seamless national inspection program whereby the federal and state inspection programs would enforce, at a minimum, a single set of statutes and regulations and that a "State inspected" seal would be sufficient evidence of the highest safety of all meat and poultry in commerce, and states wishing to impose additional food safety requirements for products to qualify for a State Seal of inspection should be permitted to do so; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Dakota Rural Action call on the SD Department of Agriculture and the SD Legislature to explore options of agreements with neighboring states to make cross border transactions of state inspected meat possible, to open up marketing options for meat producers near our borders and allow for a wider market area for state inspected meat processors located on those borders.

“ILLINOIS BRICK CASE”/INDIRECT SELLER COLLECTION

WHEREAS, the 1977 ruling by the United States Supreme Court in the “Illinois Brick Case” bars plaintiffs from collecting damages in anti-trust cases even though proven, unless they have had direct dealings with price fixers; and

WHEREAS, nearly all agriculture producers do not have direct dealings with those who have the ability to fix agricultural product prices and therefore cannot receive compensation for proven damages; now

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Dakota Rural Action support reversal of the United States Supreme Court ruling in the “Illinois Brick Case”, to permit indirect sellers to collect damages in anti-trust cases.

FARM INDUSTRY SECURITY

WHEREAS, a safe, secure, plentiful and healthy private sector agricultural and livestock industry are critical to the survival of any nation; and

WHEREAS, the autonomy and purity of America’s food supply and food producing industry is increasingly threatened by biological and economic adversaries unfriendly to the strategic viability of the United State’s agricultural and food sector; and

WHEREAS, it is the responsibility of our elected officials to enact and execute laws to protect our borders and our nation’s ability to have a fully internal food supply capability at all times; and

WHEREAS, agricultural trade shall never be subject to treaties, agreements, terms or conditions which put at risk the ability of our nation to continually and fully provide a sufficient diet for all our citizens; and

WHEREAS, it is paramount that no cartel or institution be permitted to violate the anti-trust laws protecting our production industries, and the citizens of the United States from unfair trade practices either internally or externally; and

WHEREAS, the leaders of the agricultural and livestock industries in the United States should come together to demand the long-overdue and absolutely necessary step of protecting America's ability to feed itself independently of any and all other nations; now

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Dakota Rural Action direct its congressional delegations to initiate the necessary steps to have the United States' agricultural and livestock industries declared National Security Industries and protected as such, thus requiring protection of our borders from the importation or transportation of agricultural and livestock commodities into or across our territory in any manner inconsistent with full protection of the America's biological and financial security; and

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Dakota Rural Action formally request that South Dakota's congressional delegation and the United States Justice Department undertake an investigation into the pricing and labeling practices of the commodities industry and take appropriate action to insure that industry is operating in full compliance with all anti-trust laws currently in effect.

CHECK-OFF REFORM (adopted 2002, amended 2011, 2017, 2018)

WHEREAS, all agricultural industries which have mandatory check-off policies requiring the producer to fund programs and activities are supposed to benefit the producer; and

WHEREAS, under the present arrangement the Boards administering the check-off moneys are not accountable to producers and therefore the Boards have frequently operated to promote the interests of the board members rather than the producers; and

WHEREAS, the producers have no effective say on how or where the check-off dollars are spent; and

WHEREAS, some check-off boards have worked to effectively suppress the voices of producers; and

WHEREAS, the United States Supreme Court in a 6-3 decision struck down a mushroom check-off as a violation of mushroom processors' First Amendment right to free speech; and

WHEREAS, beef, pork and many other check-offs are similar in structure to the mushroom check-off; and

WHEREAS, check-off funds are being used to promote livestock feeding arrangements, which are detrimental to independent producers; and

WHEREAS, the National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA) and other commodity groups do not speak for or represent independent producers; now

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Dakota Rural Action support court actions which will determine the

constitutionality of check-off programs; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Dakota Rural Action advocate replacing these check-offs with programs that incorporate the following:

1. A democratic system to elect the boards which administer the commodity check-off dollars;
2. A mechanism to assure that there is geographical balance among the check-off boards;
3. A prohibition against bloc voting by any organization on behalf of its members who do not vote;
4. A system which allows producers to direct where their check-off dollars are spent;
5. A system where check-off dollars are for research, education, and promotion and enforcement of the Packers and Stockyards Act of 1920; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that if the check-off programs are not administered in a manner consistent with the provisions of this resolution, Dakota Rural Action advocate for:

1. A provision whereby producers can opt out of the check-off;
2. A regularly scheduled vote by producers to insure that the check-off still meets with the approval of producers;
3. A system to easily refund check-off dollars.

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN LABELING (adopted 2003, 2010, amended 2011)

WHEREAS, the current federal standards require mandatory country of origin labeling of some meat, fruit or produce at the retail level; and

WHEREAS, USDA inspection stamps do not guarantee that meat products are 100% US grown, although many consumers assume that meat marked with the USDA stamp is domestically grown; and

WHEREAS, the World Trade Organization (WTO) has issued a preliminary ruling that the U.S. country of origin labeling (COOL) rule violates provisions of WTO's agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT); and

WHEREAS, the US Congress caved to international pressure and ended the Country of Origin Labeling requirements. Promising a voluntary system in the future; and

WHEREAS, consumers should have the choice of whether to buy US grown or foreign meat products, recognizing that many other countries do not have inspection and health safety standards as stringent as the US; now

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Dakota Rural Action urge Congress to reinstate full Country of Origin labeling and renegotiate internal trade agreements making it clear these labels are allowed.

GLOBALIZATION (adopted 2003, 2010, 2018)

WHEREAS, Dakota Rural Action supports a trade system that strengthens the health, environment, food sovereignty, working conditions and labor rights of all countries; and

WHEREAS, vibrant national economies are essential to a healthy global community; now

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that Dakota Rural Action support trade laws, agreements, and treaties that guarantee

the following rights and principles:

1. The right and ability of any nation and its political subdivisions to maintain and operate policies and programs that protect the interests of property, public health, safety, welfare and services;
2. Adherence to transparent competitive market principles and enactment of adequate anti-trust/anti-dumping remedies in order to prevent and counteract instances of market collusion, predatory practices, and declining market competition;
3. The inspection and testing of imported commodities and products to assure that they are mined, grown and/or produced under standards that are consistent with all domestic laws and regulations;
4. The jurisdiction and venue for legal challenges and violations of domestic laws and regulations shall reside in the pertinent domestic court;
5. All imported products, services, and commodities shall be purchased in an open, competitive and transparent market system;
6. All imported products have an identified fair market value that may be used as the basis for a tax to maintain and build the national infrastructure;
7. The application of quotas and/or tariffs on any commodity or product of any country when currency exchange rate differences put domestic producers at a competitive disadvantage;
8. The laws, jurisdiction, or sovereignty of a country and its political subdivisions are not undermined by trade treaties or agreements;
9. Trade treaties and agreements are negotiated and enacted through a transparent democratic process; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that Dakota Rural Action supports Fair Trade recognized products.

“BIG BOX” DISCOUNT RETAIL CHAINS (adopted 2005, 2010)

WHEREAS, Dakota Rural Action works to support independent producers and local businesses and has policy statements which defend

1. Workers’ rights to earn a living wage;
2. Fair labor practices and robust public health and safety policies;
3. Trade systems that strengthen the health, environment, food sovereignty, working conditions and labor rights of all countries;
4. Adherence to competitive market principles that guard against declining market competition and competitive disadvantages for domestic producers; and

WHEREAS, Dakota Rural Action maintains that economic development efforts in the state of South Dakota and its local communities should improve the local wage scale, enhance the local infrastructure, and capitalize on the skills, creativity and imaginations of our fellow South Dakotans; and

WHEREAS, “big box” discount retail chains have increasingly failed to uphold the employment and procurement standards outlined herein, thereby causing

1. Lower socio-economic conditions for their workers, including higher dependence on public assistance programs costing billions of tax dollars each year;
2. Excessive tax burdens on local communities to provide new infrastructure and maintenance to serve the “big box” premises;
3. Competitive disadvantages to local businesses selling like-kind merchandise, resulting in the closure of many smaller retail stores; and

WHEREAS, the Board of directors of Dakota Rural Action have adopted the following position, dated May 21, 2005: that “products, materials and supplies necessary for the maintenance and operation of Dakota Rural Action be acquired through locally owned and operated businesses when timely and available;” now

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that Dakota Rural Action encourage its members and all residents of South Dakota to make conscientious shopping decisions and urge them to adopt a similar position as stated above for their household, family, and business needs when possible; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that Dakota Rural Action call on state and local governments to quit providing corporate welfare, including local tax abatements, to “big box” discount retail chains.

Energy & Environment

RENEWABLE ENERGY POLICY (adopted 2003, amended 2010, 2011, 2013, 2014, 2017, 2018, 2021, 2022)

WHEREAS, rural communities can gain economic benefit from responsible energy development; and

WHEREAS, rural electric cooperatives that serve much of South Dakota are ill-equipped to handle the energy transition due to the threat of climate change because they are too dependent on fossil fuels for their power supply and their boards often lack transparency and are not responsive to their member owners; and

WHEREAS, the Native nations in our state are being underserved by energy suppliers causing them to have the highest energy burdens and experience the greatest persistent poverty; and

WHEREAS, a balanced energy policy promotes national security; and

WHEREAS, South Dakota is one of the top states in the nation for wind energy potential; and

WHEREAS, South Dakota’s solar resource create an environment for high photovoltaic potential; and

WHEREAS, The South Dakota Public Utilities Commission (SDPUC) that regulates Investor Owned Utilities (IOUs), has not been supportive of small energy producers; and

WHEREAS, considerable federal funding flows to local, state, and Tribal governments, communities and organizations, we need to ensure that South Dakota takes advantage of these programs, that they are flexible and do not have burdensome requirements which limit access, especially for households in low-wealth communities; now

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Dakota Rural Action promote South Dakota’s renewable energy development by

1. Advocating for a mandatory Renewable Energy Standard (RES);
2. Advocating for distributed generation of electricity including: rooftop solar, community or neighborhood systems and micro-grids;
3. Informing landowners and others of renewable energy development benefits, policy incentives, and industry practices;
4. Advocating for the elimination of state barriers to renewable energy development;
5. Advocating for the South Dakota Legislature to pass reasonable and fair net metering or other legislation that encourages local distributed energy generation;

6. Work with the SDPUC to develop more progressive policies and regulations that support small renewable energy generation, including changing the mechanism used to arrive at fair compensation to distributed energy generation producers, as well as intervening on dockets that are counter-productive to these ends
7. Collaborating with other entities to influence decisions in transmission regulation, distribution, and usage.
8. Promote the passage of Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy (C-PACE) legislation in South Dakota;
9. Supporting the local organizing work to reform electric cooperatives, including helping to elect progressive candidates to rural electric coop boards;
10. Supporting Native-lead groups who are working toward energy sovereignty, justice, and democracy; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DRA supports the development of strategic responses that promote energy democracy and a decentralized energy model – one that restructures/transitions the energy system toward clean renewable energy sources; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DRA help prioritize the development of local, community based energy resources to advance the environmental, economic and social justice needs of our communities

MORATORIUM ON URANIUM MINING (adopted 2012, 2013)

WHEREAS surface and groundwater are an important resource in South Dakota; and

WHEREAS uranium mining releases radioactive contaminants hazardous to health; and

WHEREAS water quality has never been returned to its original standard following in-situ uranium mining; and

WHEREAS in-situ uranium mining has never been tried or tested in South Dakota; and

WHEREAS the company that has applied to mine uranium in South Dakota has never undertaken an in-situ uranium mine, and

WHEREAS the existing supply of extracted uranium already is ample to address any present or future national security concerns; now

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Dakota Rural Action calls for a moratorium on all uranium mining in South Dakota.

BIOFUELS (adopted 2006, amended 2010, 2011, 2012, 2018, 2022)

WHEREAS, biofuels are produced from crops and crop residues produced domestically; and

WHEREAS, biofuels support has become more complicated as the plants are a major part of the proposals for CO₂ pipelines, and

WHEREAS, some biofuels are a better alternative for the environment than fossil fuel; and

WHEREAS, the production of biofuels has a large component of farmer- and community-owned manufacturing, changing the harmful economic dynamic of the centrally owned and controlled fossil fuel industry; and

WHEREAS, Rural towns have and will continue to benefit from biofuels production and manufacturing; now

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that Dakota Rural Action call on the federal, state and local governments to support the development of small scale biofuels, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that DRA encourage planning within communities to mitigate anticipated effects of a declining fossil fuel supply, particularly petroleum; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that DRA encourage policy change at the state and federal level to encourage the cultivation and processing of industrial hemp for biofuel and other uses; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that DRA only supports the development of biofuel sources which have a 'net energy yield' of greater than one, defined as the ratio of energy output of the fuel divided by the sum of energy inputs required to produce the fuel.

CLIMATE CHANGE (adopted 2007, amended 2010, 2014, 2016, 2017, 2018)

WHEREAS, reducing greenhouse gas emissions to the levels necessary to avoid serious climatic disruption requires the introduction of new energy technologies and other climate friendly technologies, the use of which results in low or no emissions of greenhouse gases or in the capture and storage of greenhouse gases; and

WHEREAS, dollars invested in clean energy result in high-quality manufacturing and construction jobs, as well as jobs in operations, maintenance, finance, sales, shipping, and other industries in the United States and South Dakota; and

WHEREAS, climate-friendly technologies and policies such as carbon fee and dividend can improve air quality by reducing harmful pollutants from stationary and mobile sources, and can enhance energy security by reducing reliance on imported oil, diversifying energy sources, and reducing the vulnerability of energy delivery infrastructure; and

WHEREAS, the USA on September 3, 2016 signed the Paris Climate Agreement taking effect on November 4, 2016 which demands reduced greenhouse gases; and

WHEREAS, other industrialized countries are undertaking measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, which provide the industries in those countries with a competitive advantage in the growing global market for climate-friendly technologies; and

WHEREAS, our forests and farmlands act as natural carbon storehouses, or *sinks*, offering major opportunities to slow the buildup of gases responsible for climate change and thus reduce global warming; now

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Dakota Rural Action support renewable energy, renewable fuels, energy efficiency, Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy (C- PACE) and other effective programs that help slow climate change; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Dakota Rural Action calls upon the SD Legislature and the SD Governor to prioritize planning for how the state will adapt to and mitigate the effects of climate change; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Dakota Rural Action calls upon our state's Congressional Delegation and state and local elected officials and citizens to insist that the United States be part of Climate Agreements; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Dakota Rural Action urges Congress to support carbon fee and dividend as a key element in reducing the risks of climate change. Carbon fee and dividend will significantly reduce carbon emissions, create jobs, grow the economy, save lives and protect households from higher energy prices.

OIL AND GAS TRANSPORTATION (adopted 2008, amended 2010, 2014, 2016, 2018)

WHEREAS, oil and gas development companies seek to build transportation pipelines in and through South Dakota; and

WHEREAS, this development can be hazardous to human and animal health and welfare, environmentally toxic, and in conflict with property rights; and

WHEREAS, an energy policy treating domestic fossil fuels as a resource managed based on national need while focusing on renewable energy would reduce the need for unsafe transportation option including pipelines and rail cars; and

WHEREAS, the cost of cleanup from leaking pipelines is not predictable and can be a multi-million dollar expense to the state and local governments; now

THEREFORE BE RESOLVED, that Dakota Rural Action oppose oil and gas pipelines that are not built to the highest standard for safety and environmental protection and which conflict with private property rights, tribal treaty rights and good land stewardship; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that DRA oppose perpetual easements allowing developers to use it for other developments and the use of eminent domain for private gain; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that DRA oppose nondisclosure and confidentiality agreements in part because they allow developers to play parties off against each other; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that Dakota Rural Action call on the state of South Dakota to pass legislation requiring an adequate environmental bond to be posted by the pipeline developer and used by state and local agencies to pay for environmental clean-up and landowner compensation, and to be returned to the developer only after the pipeline has been properly decommissioned for an adequate amount of time to determine long term environmental damages; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that Dakota Rural Action opposes the Keystone XL, Dakota Access Pipelines and similar future projects.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY POLICY (adopted 2011, amended 2016)

WHEREAS, the majority of our energy comes from fossil fuels not originating in South Dakota; and

WHEREAS, energy costs have risen considerably and are projected to increase further; and

WHEREAS, South Dakota is consistently rated at bottom of US States regarding energy efficiency ratings; and

WHEREAS, energy efficiency is the most cost effective way to lower energy costs and reduce our dependence on fossil fuels; and

WHEREAS, according to a 2011 Department of Energy study \$427 a year is wasted per household due to inefficient buildings; and

WHEREAS, assuming 2006 energy prices, the Building Codes Assistance Project estimates that South Dakota businesses and homeowners would save an estimated \$26 million annually by 2020 and an estimated \$50 million annually by 2030 in energy costs; and

WHEREAS, South Dakota lacks many of the regulations ensuring buildings are constructed in an efficient manner; and it is most cost effective to incorporate energy efficiency strategies at the onset of construction; now

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, Dakota Rural Action support Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) and the recommendations set forth by the South Dakota Energy Codes Work Group including:

1. Adopting a statewide residential building code, and
2. Requiring simple disclosure form for homebuyers whether a home meets the residential energy code, and if not, how the home does not meet the code, which is centrally collected and maintained by the State, and
3. Exempting energy codes from local jurisdiction authority to modify, amend, or delete from building codes adopted by local units of government.

NUCLEAR-FREE SOUTH DAKOTA (adopted 2013, 2022)

WHEREAS Dakota Rural Action in 2012 adopted a permanent call for a moratorium on all uranium mining in South Dakota ; and

WHEREAS, uranium mining has polluted the Black Hills area and adjacent locations, with hundreds of unreclaimed waste sites; and

WHEREAS, uranium mining releases radioactive contaminants extremely hazardous to health over billions of years; and

WHEREAS, uranium mining proposals currently threaten the Black Hills and surrounding areas with mine waste accident risks as well as with contamination from routine operations; and

WHEREAS, uranium mining entails private appropriation without compensation of the public water trust and contamination of precious land, water, air, and wildlife resources; and

WHEREAS, concentrated radioactive uranium process material is stored at and shipped from uranium mining sites on public thoroughfares where accidents, theft, and spills can occur; and

WHEREAS, uranium mining is mainly for the benefit of foreign investors, nuclear power plants, and corporations, not South Dakotans, and there is risk of uranium or profits from uranium sales being used for military purposes; and

WHEREAS the Governing Council of the South Dakota State Medical Association has voted unanimously to oppose uranium mining in South Dakota because of risks to public health; and

WHEREAS, thousands of people from all over the world have signed a petition to the South Dakota Secretary of Tourism opposing uranium mining because it harms tourism; and

WHEREAS, the Rapid City Council passed a resolution expressing “grave concern” about uranium mining’s potential impact on the water supply; and

WHEREAS, the potential for any nuclear power plant in South Dakota would raise substantial concerns in regards to rate-payer cost, water consumption, radiation impacts, accidents, long-term waste disposal, and other issues; and

WHEREAS, spent nuclear fuel is the basis of dirty bombs, therefore a security risk; and

WHEREAS in South Dakota there are more than 270 hazardous abandoned uranium mines and prospects; and

WHEREAS, the entire nuclear fuel chain from cradle to grave raises dire concerns; and

WHEREAS, nuclear power is not a necessity in our country's energy mix; and

WHEREAS, proven, affordable, and reliable technologies employing renewable energy are capable of meeting our needs at present and in the future, without continuing to use atomic energy for that purpose; and

WHEREAS, there is the possibility of radioactive fracking waste water being injected into wells in South Dakota; now

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that Dakota Rural Action advocates a nuclear-free South Dakota and opposes state or federal legislation, policies or activity that could:

1. Incentivize nuclear power production, nuclear waste sites, nuclear processing, or uranium mining including tax breaks, loan guarantees, grants, publicly-funded studies, or other financial incentives;
2. Lead to the location of any type of nuclear power or weapons-related processing facilities in South Dakota;
3. Pass risks or liabilities of nuclear activities onto electric customers or the public-at-large;
4. Roll-back environmental regulations related to nuclear activities or protections for public health and safety; or
5. Allocate waters of the state for the use in uranium mining and milling, nuclear power plants or weapons-related processing facilities, nuclear material processing plants, or nuclear waste sites.

CLEAN WATER RESOLUTION (adopted 2013)

WHEREAS, clean water is essential to all life; and

WHEREAS, the supply of water is becoming increasingly scarce and over-appropriated in more and more areas of the country; and

WHEREAS, in the future, South Dakota's water may be in increasing demand for mining operations, power plants, oil and gas development, and other dirty industrial uses; and

WHEREAS, under the state law, "In South Dakota, all water (surface and ground water) is the property of the people of the state"; and

WHEREAS, water is sacred in the world view of Native Americans, the descendants of the original inhabitants here; and

WHEREAS, Dakota Rural Action places the utmost importance on protecting and preserving the quality and quantity of our water from pollution and depletion from all sources including activities of mining operations, energy production, CAFOs, oil and gas development, and ANY other activities that put our water at risk; and

WHEREAS, Dakota Rural Action has always supported traditional farming and ranching practices and families; now

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that we stand for reserving the water of our state for the people's use and the well-being of the ecosystems. DRA supports systems evaluating the long-term impacts to water of proposed developments that include input from local citizens before the development is approved; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we actively defend water sheds against any operations that threaten the future of a clean and sustainable water supply in South Dakota.

BICYCLING (2015)

WHEREAS the number of people, both urban and rural, using bicycles for transportation and recreation has been increasing; and

WHEREAS commuting via bicycle decreases fossil fuel dependence and individual carbon footprints, and thus contributes to global, environmental, and social health; and

WHEREAS safe and accessible transportation infrastructure is critical to a community's success; and

WHEREAS bicyclists contribute to the local economy, and bike lanes increase property values; and

WHEREAS bicycling improves the vibrancy, health, and quality of life of a community, its residents, and visitors; and

WHEREAS the 2015 South Dakota Legislature passed legislation establishing distances for motor vehicles when passing bicycles (SD Codified Law 32-26-26.1, http://legis.sd.gov/Statutes/Codified_Laws/DisplayStatute.aspx?Type=Statute&Statute=32-26-26.1), therefore

BE IT RESOLVED that Dakota Rural Action supports the creation of bicycling plans for state and local communities, which

- establish various bicycle routes appropriate for each community;
- provide bike racks that allow for locking the frame and at least one wheel with a standard U-lock;
- provide bicycle education programs;
- include citizen participation throughout development and implementation of bicycling plans and programs; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Dakota Rural Action encourages the adoption of statewide legislation and local ordinances supporting bicycling standards and practices; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Dakota Rural Action encourages communities, universities, and businesses to obtain Bicycle Friendly status from the League of American Bicyclists.

OPPOSITION TO EXPANSION OF THE POWDER RIVER TRAINING COMPLEX (adopted 2008, amended 2011, 2014, 2017)

WHEREAS, the United States Air Force and Ellsworth Air Force Base is proposing an expansion to its Powder River Training Complex which would

1. Expand and enhance the existing Powder River Complex (PRC), which currently has both airspace and ground-based Air Force training assets in South Dakota, Wyoming, Montana, and North Dakota;
2. Add new airspace with a floor of 500 feet and eliminate some existing airspace;
3. Support additional ground-based simulated threat emitters under the Military Operations Areas (MOAs);
4. Authorize use of defensive chaff and flares throughout the special use airspace;
5. Permit supersonic flight above 10,000 feet throughout the special use airspace;
6. Support large force (over 20 aircraft) exercises (Federal Register: May 29, 2008 Volume 73, Number 104); and

WHEREAS, the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended (42 U.S.C. 4321, et seq.) requires the Federal Government to coordinate with counties which have a Natural Resource Plan; and

WHEREAS, jet plane take-offs produce 120 decibels, and noise levels greater than 85 decibels are hazardous to hearing and regular exposure of more than one minute at 110 decibels or louder can cause permanent hearing loss; and

WHEREAS, the breaking of the sound barrier, spreading of chaff and loud over flights are a direct threat to the Sage Grouse and all other wildlife, and

WHEREAS, there are no provisions for airborne access to any municipal or private airstrips except Rapid City Regional severely limiting private air travel, crop dusters, ambulance aircraft ability to travel with no provision for reimbursement of fuel or time consumption; and

WHEREAS, chaff is composed of aluminum-coated glass fibers that reflect radar being released in packets of 0.5 to 100 million fibers, which is determined to be necessary by the Department of Defense, but is known to affect human health, public safety by interfering with air traffic control radar and weather radar observations, electrical equipment, and impacts to wildlife and food supplies in an agricultural area are unknown; and

WHEREAS, flares burn at 2000 degrees and pose a serious fire risk if they are ejected as proposed at less than 1500 feet over an area that depends on voluntary fire departments and duds (flares which failed to ignite) that fall to the ground can endanger people or animals as they contain magnesium and lead; and

WHEREAS, official Air Force policy precludes wind energy development due to radar interference; now

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that Dakota Rural Action call for full coordination between the US Air Force, Ellsworth Air Force Base and the impacted local governments and agencies to ensure minimal impact of the expanded airspace to human and animal health, the environment and natural resources, and use of local infrastructure necessary for maintaining a rural quality of life; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that Dakota Rural Action opposes the expansion of the Powder River Training Complex; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the South Dakota Congressional Delegation verify that Congress has complied with Engel Act of 1958; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that any airspace used by the Air Force be rented from the landowner, with annual payments (not perpetual easements) to compensate for the use of the land including, but not limited to impacts to

agriculture and wind energy production potential.

SOUTH DAKOTA GAME, FISH AND PARKS (adopted 2004, amended 2010, 2013, 2017)

WHEREAS, the current rift in relationships between landowners and the South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks is causing unnecessary hard feelings between both hunters and landowners; now

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Dakota Rural Action support the efforts of “South Dakota Residents for Game, Fish and Parks Reform” efforts, including but not limited to

1. Providing for legislative oversight of the South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks Department;
2. Providing for legislative rather than only gubernatorial review of the South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks land acquisitions;
3. Abolishing the “open fields doctrine” in South Dakota by requiring Conservation Officers to have “probable cause: or “reasonable suspicion a crime is being committed” before entering private property;
4. Encouraging more walk-in hunting, funding and designations and encourage the South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks to act more landowner-friendly by:
 - a. consulting with landowners regarding game populations,
 - b. consulting with landowners regarding hunting access,
 - c. providing transferable licenses, coupons for landowners or other incentives,
 - d. adequately funding depredation programs,
 - e. providing more open communication with neighboring landowners before any land acquisition,
 - f. requiring that conservation officers attend a course taught by landowners on landowner relations.

Mining Law Reform – (2016, Amended 2018)

WHEREAS the General Mining Law of 1872 is outdated; and

WHEREAS the law was passed before South Dakota became a state; and

WHEREAS the law exempts hard rock mining companies from paying royalties on uranium and other minerals taken from public lands; and

WHEREAS the exemption boosts corporations’ profits at the expense of South Dakota’s natural resources – air, land, water, flora and fauna; and

WHEREAS the exemption deprives South Dakotans of compensation for the loss of our mineral wealth; and

WHEREAS the mining results in contamination, depletion, negative health effects and threats to biodiversity; and

WHEREAS the law precludes royalty compensation for negative impacts of mining; and

WHEREAS More than 10,000 abandoned uranium mines have been identified across the United States, primarily in the West, and more than 10 million people live within a 50-mile radius of one, according to a Congressional report; and

WHEREAS, according to the report, the six states that have the most abandoned uranium mines within their boundaries are Arizona (416), Colorado (1,347), New Mexico (249), South Dakota (155), Utah (1,376), and Wyoming (319); and

WHEREAS, federal agencies are bound by the 1872 Mining Law to permit and enable extraction of mineral resources; and

WHEREAS Dakota Rural Action allies are advocating proposed federal legislation for mining law reform requiring funding for and cleanup of the abandoned mines before permits are approved for new mines; and

WHEREAS Dakota Rural Action Black Hills Chapter's uranium and water committee has reached consensus on taking part in supporting the demand for no new mines until the old ones are cleaned up and stiffer regulations are in place; now

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Dakota Rural Action supports reform of the General Mining Law of 1872 and replacement legislation, including language to prevent new uranium mine permits until after old mines are cleaned up;

AND THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Dakota Rural Action Support the repeal of South Dakota state bill SB 158 (This bill removed state oversight of mining), passed in 2011, and the establishment of baseline levels of water quality, assurances that developers be required to return water to baseline levels and that they can prove that they can do so as part of permit requirements. If they can't do it permits shall be denied;

AND THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DRA support that contested cases be allowed to be brought for exploratory mining permits and temporary allocation of water for mining exploration or other mining and hazardous pipeline activities.

Support for Standing Rock and Clean Water – (adopted 2016, amended 2017)

WHEREAS, the recent Standing Rock Sioux Tribal Chairman, Dave Archambault II, along with the Tribal Council and the Sacred Stone Camp, have put forth a great effort since March 2016 to stop the Dakota Access pipeline (DAPL) from crossing the Missouri River, recognizing that this crossing would be just upstream from their drinking water intake; and

WHEREAS, Dakota Access has moved its bulldozers into a sensitive two-mile stretch of the DAPL route where many cultural sites were found by a survey conducted by a tribally sponsored team, skipping many miles of untouched route and showing a lack of sensitivity toward the Tribe and toward archaeological resources; and

WHEREAS, progress on constructing the DAPL has raised issues including the bullying use of eminent domain, a lack of proper consultation with the tribes, lack of a proper cultural resource survey, longstanding treaty rights, and above all the protection of our water - a leak into the Missouri River would not only affect Standing Rock's water but potentially the drinking water of 60% of South Dakota's population through numerous rural water systems; now

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that Dakota Rural Action joins the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe in calling for a full Environmental Impact Statement for the DAPL; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that Dakota Rural Action joins with the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe in opposing DAPL's permit to cross the Missouri River.

Social Issues & Government

RIGHT TO REFERRAL (adopted 2004, amended 2010)

WHEREAS, Dakota Rural Action (DRA) realizes that many of the registered voters in South Dakota wish to have the opportunity to vote on whether Conditional Use Permits should be issued after being acted upon by the respective county Board of Adjustments; and

WHEREAS, the citizens of South Dakota have successfully held off the legislature's attempts to take away local control from the citizens; and

WHEREAS, DRA respects the rights of the citizens of South Dakota to have the opportunity to vote through the democratic process on decisions that affect their lives and the economic viability of their community; now

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that DRA support legislation or any initiative that protects the rights of citizens of South Dakota to the initiative and referendum process, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that DRA oppose legislation or initiatives that restrict the access of citizens of South Dakota to the initiative and referendum process.

REPEAL OF THE SOUTH DAKOTA GAG LAW ON STATE AGENCIES (adopted 2003)

WHEREAS, in 1995 and 1996 the South Dakota Legislature passed South Dakota Law 1-27-27 through 1-27-32 (commonly known as the "gag law") which says that any state agency which is authorized by law to investigate, examine, or audit the papers, books, records, financial condition, or other information held by or concerning a private entity may not disclose that it is conducting such an investigation, examination or audit; and

WHEREAS, violation of this law is classified as a felony offense; and

WHEREAS, this law had to be amended in 1997 because it was found to be unconstitutional and made it impossible for environmental inspectors to comply with federal law which requires full public disclosure of companies that pollute the environment; and

WHEREAS, this law has since been used to block citizens from knowing if specific enforcement measures are being taken by state agencies, including information related to any investigations which may be occurring within South Dakota; and

WHEREAS, the public has a right to know whether state agencies are enforcing the law; and

WHEREAS, there are other state and federal laws to protect the rights of individuals under investigation; now

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Dakota Rural Action support the repeal of South Dakota Codified Law 1-27-27 through 1-27-32 (commonly known as the "gag law").

SOUTH DAKOTA'S REGRESSIVE TAXES (adopted 2010, amended 2011, 2014, 2018)

WHEREAS South Dakota's tax structure is highly regressive, meaning the state and local tax burden falls harder on the lower incomes than those more well off; and

WHEREAS, due to this disproportionate tax burden on low income families, South Dakota's tax structure is ranked by the Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy as one of the "Terrible Ten" most regressive state tax structures in the nation; and

WHEREAS sales tax is one of the most regressive taxes, especially when it is imposed on food and utility bills, as it is in South Dakota; and

WHEREAS, South Dakota cities are hamstrung in their ability to set local tax rates; and

WHEREAS regressive taxes work against DRA's values and the people of South Dakota; and

WHEREAS regressive taxes create a situation inhibiting the upward mobility of low income families; and

WHEREAS education institutions in South Dakota are experiencing debilitating cuts in funding due to lack of state revenues; and

WHEREAS shortcomes in state funding forces counties to make up the gap with increased property taxes; and

WHEREAS sales tax loopholes in 2011 equaled \$500 million each year in estimated revenue; and

WHEREAS the purpose of sales tax exemptions is to encourage new businesses in South Dakota, benefit people in need and embolden programs that benefit all South Dakotans; now

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Dakota Rural Action support policy initiatives to reduce the regressivity of South Dakota's tax structure by:

1. Removal of sales tax from food,
2. Creation of a personal income tax that exempts the first \$40,000 of federal taxable income,
3. Creation of a corporate income tax that exempts the first \$40,000 of federal taxable income,
4. Requires the state legislature to review the sales tax loopholes every five years to ensure exemptions reflect current economic well-being for the state; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DRA oppose the state's policy returning excise taxes to large projects that exacerbates the unfair tax system by picking the richest as the winners and puts the burden on lower and middle class taxpayers; and

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION, RESPECT (adopted 2017, amended 2020, 2021)

WHEREAS, all land now known as South Dakota is land stolen from the Oceti Sakowin, The Seven Council Fires, the Great Sioux Nation, and

WHEREAS, people were stolen from their homelands, enslaved, and forced to come to what is now known as the United States and its territories for the economic benefit of white people, and

WHEREAS, accounts of incidents of hate targeted at groups such as: Native American, Muslim, Sikh, Hindu, Arab, Jewish, Latinx, African-American, Asian, female, people with disabilities, refugee, immigrant, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, two spirited and other vulnerable community members have been reported to police, on social media, and to advocacy organizations across the nation and in South Dakota; and

WHEREAS, many marginalized groups of people including but not limited to the original Indigenous inhabitants of South, Alaskan Natives, BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color) refugees, immigrants, LGBTQ2SIA (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, two spirit, intersex, asexual), persons who are unhoused, and persons not U. S. citizens both documented and undocumented by the U.S. government and residing in South Dakota, and persons who adhere to religions other than Christianity are hurting and fearful as a result of the rise of discrimination or the rhetoric of exclusion and vilification; and

WHEREAS, MMIWCM (Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women, Children and Men) numbers continue to increase as a result of increased activities surrounding extractive industries, hunting seasons, and the Sturgis Bike Rally and inadequate support from the law enforcement community; and

WHEREAS, thousands of children's bodies are being discovered buried at or near boarding schools for Native American children, and previously refused burial in their homelands; and

WHEREAS, the 1851 and 1868 Treaties of Fort Laramie, agreements between the Oceti Sakowin (the Great Sioux Nation) and the United States Government, and recognized by the United States Constitution in Article VI, Clause 2 "all Treaties made or which shall be made, under the Authority of The United States, shall be the Supreme Law of the Land ..."; and

WHEREAS, there is a national #LANDBACK movement led by Native Americans and Alaska Natives to regain stolen land; and

WHEREAS, our communities draw strength from the diversity of people including age; ethnicity; gender; gender identity; language; physical and mental abilities; race; religion; sexual orientation; political ideology; and perspective; and

WHEREAS, the United States and South Dakota's Constitutions support the peaceful exercise of free speech and assembly for all people; now

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Dakota Rural Action seek out and become good allies to a variety of Native led organizations and grassroot efforts, encourages employers, organizations and governmental entities to uphold justice, provide equality and equity of opportunity for all, actively encourage all voices to be heard, promote inclusion, and oppose acts of intolerance or discrimination; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DRA strives to an ally and seeks counsel from our friends on ways we can better achieve this goal, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DRA opposes the enactment by the State Legislature or by local ordinance any measure that would discriminate.

INDEPENDENT REDISTRICTING COMMISSION - 2018

WHEREAS, Dakota Rural Action (DRA) understands that all issues and DRA-endorsed resolutions that come before the South Dakota Legislature need to be decided by elected representatives who actually represent the voters; and

WHEREAS, representative democracy does not exist where redistricting by partisan legislative committees are responsible for drawing new voting district lines, because of partisan, racial, incumbent, and rural/urban gerrymandering; and

WHEREAS, the best method for insuring that voters pick their representatives, rather than representatives picking their voters is to switch to an independent, nonpartisan commission;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that DRA supports legislation, including an amendment to the South Dakota State Constitution to change the redistricting process from a legislatively-controlled one to an independent and nonpartisan citizen commission.