

# BY-LAWS OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA LATINO CAUCUS

## Article I NAME AND PURPOSE

Section 1. **Name:** The organization shall be known as District of Columbia Latino Caucus, (hereinafter “DC Latino Caucus”).

Section 2. **Purpose:** The DC Latino Caucus will serve as a channel for the participation and involvement of Latinos in the Democratic Party and in other political activities within the greater Washington, D.C. metropolitan area. This includes, but is not limited to: serving as an independent citizens’ lobbying group before metropolitan area officials, city administrators, neighborhood associations, and other organized groups; promoting Latino involvement in the political process through voter registration and education projects; endorsing specific Democratic Party candidates and candidates in non-partisan elections who are seeking an elective or appointive office affecting the Washington metropolitan area; and providing personnel and financial assistance to endorsed candidates pursuant to applicable Federal, state and local law.

## Article II MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. **Membership in General:** Membership in the DC Latino Caucus shall be open to all people who are interested in furthering Latino involvement in the political process.

Section 2. **Classes of Membership:** There shall be certain categories of membership. All categories of membership shall have equal voting rights and responsibilities for the operation of the DC Latino Caucus. Dues for each category of membership shall be set by vote of the membership, except that no dues shall be required of an Honorary member. The President has discretion to accept low-income members. The categories of membership and their dues are as follows:

- (a) General - \$35.00 per year;
- (b) Special - \$10.00 per year (for senior citizens, students and limited-income members);
- (c) Honorary - No dues shall be required;
- (d) Activist – Dues may be waived by Executive Committee.

Section 3. **Term of Membership:** The term of membership for all categories except Honorary shall be from the first day of the month the member joined to the last day of the same month in the following year. Members who have not paid current dues shall not have voting rights, except that their voting rights may be reinstated immediately by payment of dues for the current calendar year at any meeting of the DC Latino Caucus. The term of an Honorary member shall be indefinite. Honorary members shall be selected upon two-thirds vote of the members present and voting at a regularly scheduled meeting. The Executive Committee may waive dues of active DC Latino Caucus committee members (Activists).

Section 4. **General Meetings:** General meetings of the DC Latino Caucus shall take place quarterly at a regular time and location unless a change is announced at the previous general meeting or by electronic mail no later than 30 days prior to the scheduled meeting. The Executive Committee shall have the power to change the meeting date and time as necessary for extraordinary reasons.

Section 5. **Special Meetings:** Special meetings may be called by written notice of the Executive Committee. Such meetings shall be announced to the membership by mail (electronic and/or postal) or at a general membership meeting not less than two weeks before the special meeting is to take place. The announcement shall give the purpose for the special meeting. No other business may be transacted at that meeting.

Section 6. **Quorum:** A quorum for voting purposes shall consist of ten members and one presiding officer or ten percent of the members, whichever is less. Without a quorum, no action may be taken by the membership; however, a quorum will be presumed unless lack of such quorum is noticed by the presiding officer.

Section 7. **Voting:** Votes on endorsements for candidates for public office may be cast only by persons who have been members for at least 30 calendar days. Votes on amendments to the Bylaws may be cast only by persons who have been members for at least 60 calendar days. Votes on all other matters may be cast by all members in good standing. No proxies shall be permitted in voting at any time.

Section 8. **Membership List Access:** Copies of the DC Latino Caucus membership list shall not be distributed outside the DC Latino Caucus. Arrangements may be made to allow other organizations to mail information to DC Latino Caucus members provided:

(a) The organization's goals and the purpose of the mailing are in keeping with the interests of the DC Latino Caucus;

(b) A majority of the Executive Committee votes to allow the use of the membership list;

(c) Adequate provisions are made to ensure that the security and integrity of the list and the information on the list can be maintained; and

(d) Notification of the identities of the organizations making requests for the membership list shall be provided at the general meeting following the request.

### Article III OFFICERS

Section 1. **Officers:** The officers of the DC Latino Caucus shall be the President, the Vice President, the Secretary, the Treasurer, and the Communications Officer.

Section 2. **President:** The President shall be the chief executive officer of the DC Latino Caucus, having general charge of the DC Latino Caucus' affairs and its agents. The President will be authorized to sign all checks, agreements, and other legal documents of the DC Latino Caucus. The President shall preside over all Executive Committee and general membership meetings and shall perform all duties incident to the office of the President including those which may be defined or modified by the bylaws. The President shall have discretion in determining the activities which will further the purposes of the DC Latino Caucus subject to review by the Executive Committee and the membership. Except as otherwise specified in the bylaws, the President shall appoint all committees, coordinators and other agents of the DC Latino Caucus and will assign duties appropriately.

Section 3. **Vice President:** The Vice President shall periodically review the bylaws, and shall work in concert with the Secretary and Treasurer to strengthen the membership and financial condition of the DC Latino Caucus. The Vice President shall consult with the Executive Committee on the appointment of committees, task forces, and coordinators, as needed, to carry out the duties of the office. The Vice President shall assume the duties of the President in the absence or disability of the President. If the President resigns, the Vice President shall act as President until a new President is elected according to the rules in Article VI.

Section 5. **Secretary:** The Secretary shall give, or cause to be given, notice of general and special meetings to the membership. The Secretary shall keep the minutes of the general meetings, meetings of the Executive Committee, and other meetings as assigned. The Secretary shall keep an official list of the entire membership, and such other lists as are deemed necessary for DC Latino Caucus functions and shall not distribute any copy of the DC Latino Caucus membership list outside the DC Latino Caucus. The Secretary shall also keep copies of all correspondence generated by the DC Latino Caucus and have it reasonably available for inspection by the membership.

Section 6. **Treasurer:** The Treasurer shall have custody of the DC Latino Caucus funds and shall properly maintain the DC Latino Caucus financial records. The Treasurer shall keep an accurate account of all receipts and expenditures and shall promptly deposit all funds in such accounts as may be designated by the Executive Committee. The Treasurer shall be authorized to sign all checks and will disburse the funds of the DC Latino Caucus as may be properly ordered by the President, Executive Committee, or membership. The Treasurer shall make a financial report, in writing, at each meeting detailing income and expenditures for the past reporting period. The Treasurer shall be responsible for preparing and filing all financial reports as may be required by law or regulation. In the case of a vacancy in the office of the Treasurer, the President shall appoint an Acting Treasurer until a successor is elected in accordance with Article VI. The Acting Treasurer shall have all powers and duties of the Treasurer. The President may appoint an existing officer. If the President fails to make an appointment within 5 days of the vacancy, the Vice President for Administration shall become Acting Treasurer until such appointment is made or a Treasurer is elected.

Section 7. **Communications Officer:** The Communications Officer shall be responsible for communicating to the membership the activities of the DC Latino Caucus, whether through electronic mail, postal mail, or other means. The Communications Officer shall also assist with media relations, including distributing press releases concerning DC Latino Caucus activities. The Communications Officer shall be appointed by the President with the consent of the Executive Committee.

Section 8. **Terms of Office:** The term of office of all officers of the DC Latino Caucus shall be for two years from the beginning of the election, where all officers were elected. Replacements or vacancies fill after elections are good for the remainder of those positions and will expire on the next election cycle.

Section 9. **Removal or Resignation:** Removal of an officer from office before the end of the term shall be for cause and shall be at any general meeting by a 2/3 vote of those present who are members in good standing, providing notification of such pending action has been distributed to the membership at least two weeks in advance. Where a member requests a motion for removal and notification, the request shall be in writing to the President or Secretary and shall state the reasons for the request. The request shall be signed by at least two general members. In the case of a vacancy of an elected office, the President shall appoint an acting officer until a successor is elected in accordance with Article VI.

#### Article IV

### DEMOCRATIC STATE COMMITTEE EX-OFFICIO

Section 1. **Ex-Officio Members:** The DC Latino Caucus shall elect two members, one male and one female, from among their membership to serve as Ex-Officio Members of the D.C. Democratic State Committee. The term of office of each Ex-Officio Member shall be two years.

Section 2. **Reporting:** The Ex-Officio Members shall from time to time report to the membership at a general meeting or to the Executive Committee at its meetings on the activities of the D.C. Democratic State Committee.

Section 3. **Relationship between the DC Latino Caucus and the Ex-Officio Members:** The Executive Committee or the membership has the right to instruct the Ex-Officio members to take positions on matters being considered by the State Democratic Committee.

#### Article V

### COMMITTEES

Section 1. **Appointment:** The President shall, with the approval of the membership or the Executive Committee, appoint members of the standing committees and their chairpersons as described below.

Section 2. **Executive Committee:** The Executive Committee shall be comprised of the President, the Vice President, the Secretary, the Treasurer, the Chairperson of the Membership Committee, the Chairperson of the Finance Committee, the Communications Officer, the two Ex-Officio Members of the D.C. Democratic State Committee, and any chairpersons of ad hoc committees.

Any appointed Counsel shall serve as ex-officio members of the Committee. The Executive Committee shall assist the President in the preparation of the agenda for each meeting, provide guidance to the membership in the deliberations of the DC Latino Caucus, and carry out the instructions of the DC Latino Caucus once a vote has been taken on an issue. The Executive Committee will meet prior to each general meeting at a time and a place specified by the President, and announced to the membership.

**Section 3. Membership Committee:** The Membership Committee shall have as its responsibilities the production and physical or electronic mailing of materials issued by the DC Latino Caucus for its members and others, the recruitment of members, and the planning and execution of social functions of interest to the membership. The Communications Officer shall serve on the Committee. (Where this Committee's responsibility may overlap with the responsibilities of the Finance Committee, all actions shall be taken cooperatively.)

**Section 4. Finance Committee:** The Finance Committee shall adopt and execute a yearly fundraising plan made in accordance with the budget developed by the Executive Committee. (Where this Committee's responsibility may overlap with the responsibilities of the Membership Committee, all actions shall be taken cooperatively.)

**Section 5. Ad Hoc Committees:** The President may, with the consent of the Executive Committee, appoint such committees as may from time to time be necessary to carry out the business of the DC Latino Caucus.

## **Article VI ELECTIONS**

**Section 1. Election of Officers:** Election of officers shall be at the January general meeting or at such other special meeting as the Executive Committee may determine after notice pursuant to Article II, Section 5. Nominations may be accepted from the floor, and all voting shall be by secret ballot.

**Section 2. Removal or Resignation:** In the case of the removal or resignation of any officer, notice in writing of such vacancy shall be made within thirty days of the effective date of such vacancy to the membership. At the regular membership meeting of the DC Latino Caucus following such notification, nominations for the office shall be made and an election for the office held, except that it shall not occur at a meeting less than 30 days after such notification has been made.

**Section 3. Ex-Officio Members:** A male and a female member shall be elected to serve as Ex-Officio Members of the D.C. Democratic State Committee members at any general meeting provided that 30 days notice of the election is given. Nominations may be accepted from the floor, and all voting shall be by secret ballot. A representative of the D.C. Democratic State Committee shall preside over the election of the Ex-Officio Members. An Ex-Officio Member may be removed from office for cause at any general meeting by a 2/3 vote of those present who are members in good standing, providing notification of such pending action has been distributed

to the membership at least two weeks in advance. In the case of a vacancy, the President shall appoint an acting Ex-Officio Member until a successor is elected in accordance with this Article.

**Article VII  
EXPENDITURES**

Expenditures will be made in accordance with a budget prepared by the Executive Committee and approved by the membership. Non-budget expenditures of up to \$500.00 per event or instance may be approved by the President. Non-budget expenditures of \$500.01 or more must be approved by the Executive Committee.

**Article VIII  
FISCAL YEAR**

The DC Latino Caucus' fiscal year shall be the period from January 1 through December 31 of one calendar year.

**Article IX  
PROCEDURE**

Section 1. **Rules of Order:** Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised, shall govern this organization except as otherwise provided for herein.

Section 2. **Other Matters:** Rules of Procedure for the DC Latino Caucus shall be adopted to provide for the governance of the affairs of the DC Latino Caucus in matters not provided for in these Bylaws. Standing rules of procedure or amendments may be proposed by any member or group of members. Standing Rules of Procedure may be adopted or amended by a majority vote of the DC Latino Caucus members present and voting at any regularly scheduled meeting provided that the text of the proposed standing rule or amendment has been distributed to the membership attending the previous meeting, and distributed via electronic mail to all addressees on the DC Latino Caucus electronic mailing list at least 30 days in advance.

**Article X  
AMENDMENTS**

Amendments to these bylaws may be made by a 2/3 vote of those members voting at a regularly scheduled or special meeting, provided that the text of the proposed change has been distributed to the membership at least thirty days in advance. Amendments may be proposed by any member or group of members.

**Article XI  
ELECTION PLAN**

No later than March of each year, the Executive Committee will have an election plan specifying the timing of endorsements, campaign contributions, voter registration drives, and other related activities. Such plan shall be officially adopted by the Executive Committee, which shall adopt a budget for the election plan.

**Article XII**  
**ENDORSEMENT OF CANDIDATES**

Section 1. **Offices for Endorsement:** The DC Latino Caucus may endorse candidates for any federal, state or local elected office. Endorsements of candidates seeking support for election/selection to Advisory Neighborhood Commissions, State Democratic Committees or any other commissions, boards or organizations shall be subject to general rules governing motions.

Section 2. **Candidate Statement:** The DC Latino Caucus shall request from each candidate to be considered for endorsement, a statement which shall be distributed to the DC Latino Caucus membership in advance of the meeting where the endorsement will be voted or request an oral statement, which may be made to the membership in advance of the vote to endorse.

Section 3. **Endorsement Voting:** DC Latino Caucus endorsements for candidates shall be obtained according to the following voting procedure:

(a) A majority vote of 51% or more of the DC Latino Caucus members present and voting shall be required to endorse candidates seeking elective or appointive office. All votes for endorsement shall be by secret ballot. All ballots will provide for the option of voting to abstain or the option to not endorse any candidate.

(b) If no candidate receives a majority vote on the first ballot, a second ballot shall be conducted upon adoption of a motion by any member. In that case the two candidates receiving the greatest number of votes will be considered on a second ballot except as provided in (d) below. In the case of a tie vote involving either of the two candidates to be considered for a second ballot, all of the qualifying tied candidates will be included.

(c) If, after a second ballot, a candidate has not received a majority vote, the DC Latino Caucus's official position in that race will be "No Endorsement."

(d) In any race where more than one seat is available, the DC Latino Caucus may endorse as many candidates as there are seats available. In cases where a second ballot is to be conducted, the number of candidates on a second ballot will be twice the number of seats for which to vote.

**Article XIII**  
**CAMPAIGN CONTRIBUTIONS**

Section 1. **Separate Vote:** The vote to make a financial contribution to an endorsed candidate's campaign must be voted as a separate question from the vote to endorse.

Section 2. **Type of Contribution:** Contributions may be made in the form of independent expenditures paid for by the DC Latino Caucus as well as a direct contribution to the campaign.

Section 3. **Advertisement:** In races where the DC Latino Caucus' position is "No Endorsement," a motion to consider indicating support for more than one candidate in advertisements paid for by the DC Latino Caucus, may be approved with a two-thirds vote of those present and voting.

Section 4. **Applicability of Law:** All direct, indirect or in-kind campaign donations will be made in strict conformity with federal, state, District, and other laws, as applicable.

**Article XIV**  
**SPECIAL AND FEDERAL ELECTIONS**

In the case of special elections for District positions and elections held for federal candidates, the Executive Committee shall consider which provisions of Article XIII are practical for implementation and shall submit the plan to the membership for approval. The provisions of Article XIV shall apply to all such candidates.