

RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF THE “ONE WASHINGTON DIVERSITY” CAMPAIGN

WHEREAS, Initiative 200 (the Affirmative Action Ban initiative sponsored by Tim Eyeman and Scott Smith), passed on the November 1998 ballot, bans the use of Affirmative Action programs to recruit, admit, hire or contract with women and people of color in public education, public employment and public contracting; and

WHEREAS, according to testimony by Teresa Bernsten, Director of the Office of Women and Minority Business Enterprises, “In the five years before the passage of I-200, state agencies and higher education institutions spent 10% of their contracting and procurement dollars with certified minority and woman-owned businesses,” Bernstein stated. “Since the passage of I-200, that rate has declined to an average of 3%. And additionally, the number of certified firms has declined by nearly half. If the rate of spending would have stayed at the levels prior to I-200, an additional \$3.5 billion would have gone to small minority and woman-owned businesses.”; and

WHEREAS, According to testimony from Kirk Shultz, President of WA State University and the University of WA President Ana Marie Cauce, our universities have lost out in attracting desirable teachers, researchers, students, and innovators, with our students and our state paying the price from the result of our state not reaching out and the resulting message that WA State does not welcome or value diversity; and

WHEREAS, Tyson Marsh, Seattle University’s Associate Professor of Educational Administration has noted that “There are a lack of teachers and leaders of color to mentor and visually represent what students could work towards. Districts are not doing what they can to hire teachers of color. . . My concern is that people are so miseducated that they don’t understand what affirmative action is. The purpose of affirmative action was to provide representation in response to a history of white supremacy. The very structures and systems that make up our society were actively created to exclude communities of color. Affirmative action was meant to temporarily restore the rights of people of color to participate in a system that was not designed for them to participate.”; and

WHEREAS, the ONE WASHINGTON DIVERSITY CAMPAIGN is a statewide movement for Diversity, Equity & Inclusion in education, jobs and government contracting for qualified women, veterans, disabled and people of color; and

WHEREAS, the ONE WASHINGTON DIVERSITY CAMPAIGN is actively working for the passage of two (2) ballot initiatives: I-1644, an Initiative to the People; and I-981, an Initiative to the Legislature; and

WHEREAS, both Initiatives achieve the following same goals and objectives:

- Creates Washington State’s first Governor’s Commission on Diversity, Equity & Inclusion;
- Redefines Affirmative Action to provide equal opportunities in Education, Employment and Entrepreneurship for the following groups: Qualified Women • Veterans • Disabled • People of Color;
- Expands Affirmative Action which currently only covers Viet Nam-era & Disabled Veterans to now include all honorably discharged veterans.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the First District Democrats (FDD) endorses passage of Initiatives 1644 & 981, and

THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the FDD urges its member to sign and to gather signatures for Initiative 981, taking us one step closer to that day when I-200 is finally history.

Proposed by the First District Democrats Issues Committee - June 7, 2018.

Recommend Do Pass