

RESOLUTION DECLARING THAT BLACK LIVES MATTER

WHEREAS, systemic racism has a negative impact on Black lives;

WHEREAS, over 400 years has passed since the first imprisoned African Slaves arrived in The United States;

WHEREAS, the state of Oregon was founded as a state for white persons only;

WHEREAS, the national Democratic Party Platform provides: “More than half a century after Rosa Parks sat and Dr. King marched and John Lewis bled, more than half a century after César Chávez, Dolores Huerta, and Larry Itliong organized, race still plays a significant role in determining who gets ahead in America and who gets left behind. We must face that reality and we must fix it.”

WHEREAS, the national Democratic Party platform provides “Democrats will fight to end institutional and systemic racism in our society. We will challenge and dismantle the structures that define lasting racial, economic, political, and social inequity. Democrats will promote racial justice through fair, just, and equitable governing of all public-serving institutions and in the formation of public policy. Democrats support removing the Confederate battle flag from public properties, recognizing that it is a symbol of our nation’s racist past that has no place in our present or our future. We will push for a societal transformation to make it clear that black lives matter and that there is no place for racism in our country”;

WHEREAS, the national Democratic Party platform acknowledges “African Americans and Latinos lost more than half of their net worth as a result of the housing crisis and the Great Recession, because they lost jobs at a much faster rate than white workers and because they were disproportionately targeted for subprime, predatory, and fraudulent mortgages during the run-up to the housing crisis”;

WHEREAS, the national Democratic Party platform states “Democrats are committed to reforming our criminal justice system and ending mass incarceration. Something is profoundly wrong when almost a quarter of the world’s prison population is in the United States, even though our country has less than five percent of the world’s population”;

WHEREAS, the national Democratic Party platform states “We will work with police chiefs to invest in training for officers on issues such as de-escalation and the creation of national guidelines for the appropriate use of force. We will encourage better police-community relations, require the use of body cameras, and stop the use of weapons of war that have no place in our communities. We will end racial profiling that targets individuals solely on the basis of race, religion, ethnicity, or national origin, which is un-American and counterproductive”;

WHEREAS, the national Democratic Party platform states “we recognize our current marijuana laws have had an unacceptable disparate impact in terms of arrest rates for African Americans that far outstrip arrest rates for whites, despite similar usage rates”;

WHEREAS, plank #8 in Article 9 of the Democratic Party of Oregon Platform states “We oppose racially-targeted policing, prosecutorial overcharging, coercive plea bargains, biased jury selection, and sentencing practices that result in a disproportionate number of African American, Latino, Native American, other people of color, and economically disadvantaged people entering and being trapped in the criminal justice system.”;

WHEREAS, plank #16 in Article 10 of the Democratic Party of Oregon Platform states “We strongly support a national commission to explore the concepts, legal and implementation ramifications,

and reparations for past injustices including sterilization, infection, mutilation, and killing, perpetrated against Native Americans, Black Americans, people with disabilities, and other minority groups by federal and state governments”;

WHEREAS, the Democratic Party of Oregon has adopted Resolution 2019-008, which names racism as a threat to public health;

WHEREAS, “Racism is a system of structuring opportunity and assigning values on the societal interpretation of how one looks (which we call ‘race’), that unfairly disadvantages some individuals and communities, unfairly advantages other individuals and communities, and saps the strength of the whole society through the waste of human resources.” American Public Health Association (APHA) Past President Camara Jones, MD, PhD, MPH cited in ALPHA internet article on Racism and Health;

WHEREAS, as set forth in the aforementioned article on Racism and Health, “Racism may be intentional or unintentional. It operates at various levels in society. Racism is a driving force of the societal determinants of health (like housing, education, and employment) and is a barrier to health equity.”;

WHEREAS, as pointed out by Jacqueline Howard, CNN correspondent in her updated report of August 15, 2017, regarding the deadly act that occurred during a white nationalist rally in Charlottesville, Virginia, at least four medical groups call hate crimes a public health concern. After Charlottesville, the American College of Physicians posted on its website: “Hate crimes directed at people based on their race, ethnicity, gender, nationality, sexual orientation, religion or other characteristics are a public health issue.” The American Psychological Association, the American Medical Association, and the American Academy of Family Physicians also have issued statements on hate crimes as a public health concern;

WHEREAS, the Howard report cites studies that suggest that experiences of racism or discrimination raise the risk of emotional and physical health problems, including depression, cardiovascular disease and even death;

WHEREAS, racial disparities in access to healthcare, treatment; preventative education and biological experimentation have had a negative impact on Black health and life expectancy

WHEREAS, the systemic exclusion and theft of generational wealth has had a negative impact of Black life expectancy;

WHEREAS, black persons are subject to housing discrimination, have lower levels of homeownership and unstable housing affecting overall health;

WHEREAS, Black lives are disproportionately shortened by the effects of environmental racism;

WHEREAS, it follows that systemic racism and discriminatory treatment that occurs in the criminal justice system is a barrier to health equity whether by creating higher levels of stress and chronic illnesses, depriving one of the economic abilities to have access to health care, and/or by the negative impact of direct interaction with law enforcement on overall wellbeing;

WHEREAS, deadly force should be a last resort for law enforcement;

WHEREAS, in 2019, 24 percent of those killed by police in the United States were Black, even though Black people account for only 13 percent of the population; 1

WHEREAS, Black people are 3 times more likely to be killed by police than white persons; 1

WHEREAS, Black people are more likely than white people to be unarmed when killed by police; 1

WHEREAS, from 2013-2019, 99 percent of killings by police did not result in officers being charged with a crime. 1

WHEREAS, the above recitals clearly demonstrate findings that systemic racism is a burden on our culture, shortens black lives and has been acknowledged by the Democratic Party as a barrier to having black lives truly matter;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Marion County Democratic Central Committee declares that Black Lives Matter and supports changing systems to mitigate the impact of systemic racism.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Black people must be included in the discussions and decision-making processes involving the causes, consequences and solutions in the effects of racism.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED the MCDCC shall make meeting space available for Black Lives Matter meetings.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED the MCDCC shall post Black Lives Matter artwork both in the front window and inside the meeting hall.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED the Chair of the MCDCC is encouraged to sign petitions and letters in support of Black Lives Matter activists and activities as Chair of the MCDCC.