



PUBLIC TESTIMONY

ATTORNEY & FORMER WASHINGTON STATE REPRESENTATIVE JESSE WINEBERRY

CHAIR – ONE WASHINGTON EQUALITY CAMPAIGN COMMITTEE

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 22, 2019 – 12:00PM

BEFORE THE SEATTLE PORT COMMISSION

SEATTLE PORT COMMISSION MOTION 2019-12

Good afternoon President Bowman and all Commission Members. I am attorney and former Washington State Representative Jesse Wineberry, Chair of the ONE WASHINGTON EQUALITY CAMPAIGN COMMITTEE, the authors of Initiative 1000 and organizers of the APPROVE I-1000 CAMPAIGN.

"We at the One Washington Equality Campaign acknowledge that we are on indigenous land, the unceded ancestral lands of the Duwamish people, Seattle's Host Tribe. A people that has occupied this land since time immemorial. A people who are still living right here today, fighting for federal recognition and bringing to light the Duwamish Tribe's rich heritage."

We come before you today to urge your passage of Seattle Port Commission Motion 2019-12.

We thank President Bowman for coming to Olympia last April to testify in support of I-1000, the Washington State Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Act. We enthusiastically support your Motion which endorses the APPROVAL of Initiative 1000, on Referendum 88.

It is quite fitting for the Seattle Port Commission to make your voices heard on this Diversity Act, because Diversity has always begun at America's Ports of entry.

Over 170 years ago, one of the first acts of Diversity in Washington state was by Chief Sealth, a Native man of color and chief of the Duwamish and Suquamish tribes. These tribes were the majority population welcoming Arthur Denny and other minority white settlers who arrived in 1851 on ships at Alki Point, Seattle's original port of entry.

Since that time, the Ports of Seattle has welcomed millions of people of all ages, cultures, races and nationalities who come to Washington state to achieve their Dreams. I-1000 is the People's Initiative to the Legislature whose purpose is to enable all of Washington's citizens to achieve their dreams by removing the impediments of discrimination put in place 21 years ago by Tim Eyman's Initiative 200.

I-1000 started over one year ago right here in Seattle. It was drafted in Seattle and the first people to sign I-1000 were Seattle residents of all races, ages and cultures at Mount Zion Baptist Church.

A movement which started in Seattle, ultimately spread throughout the entire state and when it was all said and done, more than 395,000 Washington voters had signed I-1000, the most signatures for any Initiative to the Legislature in Washington state history.

We bring you now a Peoples Initiative which has been THOROUGHLY VETTED. Unlike Initiative 200, which killed Affirmative Action for women and people of color back in 1998, I-1000 has been passed by the Washington State Legislature, approved by the King County and Seattle City Councils, upheld by the Washington State Courts, endorsed by not only the current Governor Jay Inslee, but every living former Democrat and Republican Governor.

I-1000 bans discrimination today and creates the state's first Governor's Commission on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion to fight discrimination tomorrow. That's a big reason why I-1000 has been endorsed by the Seattle Times, The Stranger, The News Tribune, The Olympian and the Vancouver Columbian newspapers.

I-1000 replaces I-200's old racially blind policy with a new racially conscious policy which was recently upheld by Federal District Court Judge Allison Burroughs in Students for Fair Admissions v. Harvard University.

So the Courts – State & Federal – have spoken. The Legislature has spoken. Martin Luther King County, the State's largest County, has spoken. Yesterday, the Seattle City Council passed Resolution 31913, urging voters in the state's largest city to APPROVE I-1000 on Referendum 88. Now is the time for the Seattle Port Commission to speak loudly and proudly by passing Motion 2019-12.

And once I-1000 is law, we will be back to ask the Seattle Port Commission to pass an ordinance requiring every port agency and department to implement the policies of I-1000. Because as we all know, the only thing worse than a bad law, is a good law never implemented.

THANK YOU for allowing public testimony on Motion 2019-12. We urge your UNANIMOUS YES VOTE!