

BEFORE THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF LANE COUNTY, OREGON

ORDER AND RESOLUTION  
NO: 20-02-11-11

In the Matter of

Approving a Resolution Denouncing White  
Nationalism in Lane County.

**WHEREAS**, the Board of Commissioners of Lane County have joined with other elected officials throughout Lane County and Oregon to pledge their commitment to providing safe, welcoming, and respectful communities that includes the following:

- Continue to build strong and vibrant communities that promote kindness, compassion, and respect; and
- Support each other to speak our minds in appropriate ways, welcome all viewpoints, and disagree respectfully; and
- Understand that language and actions rooted in prejudice, fear, ignorance, or hate are not acceptable at any time; and
- Help each other to collaborate, problem solve, and resolve our differences using positive language and approaches; and
- Work to bring our teams and communities together and to maintain a welcoming environment where every person feels safe; and

**WHEREAS**, in alignment with the Board of Commissioners' goals of a safe and healthy county and vibrant communities; and

**WHEREAS**, we recognize there has been a rise of white nationalist, white supremacist, and alt-right groups in the United States, many of which have been emboldened by the national political dialogue; and

**WHEREAS**, we are committed to a just and inclusive democracy. White nationalism places the interests of white people over those of other racial groups, and is an ideology focused on maintaining white political, economic, and demographic dominance, and it is at odds with our vision for Lane County; and

**WHEREAS**, the Oregon Constitution states, "No law shall be passed restraining the free expression of opinion, or restricting the right to speak, write, or print freely on any subject whatever; *but every person shall be responsible for the abuse of this right*" (emphasis intentional.) Free speech is a core principle of our democracy. The agenda of white nationalist groups seeks to destabilize our democracy, use fear as a tactic of control, divide our communities, and promote and ignite social animosities; and

**WHEREAS**, we understand Lane County exists within the historical context of our nation and state. Marginalized communities have experienced generational oppression and

traumas related to the decisions made by people and governments in both the past and present. White supremacy groups have a history of advocating for the marginalization of communities of color through government policies.

The State of Oregon also has a history of enacting racist policies that have left lasting harm on communities of color, including entering the Union as a “whites only” state in 1859, refusing to ratify the 14th and 15th amendments to the United States Constitution, and enacting black exclusion laws.

**NOW, THEREFORE,** the Board of County Commissioners of Lane County **ORDERS and RESOLVES** as follows:

1. The Board of Commissioners support Lane County being a welcoming, inclusive, and safe community for everyone who lives, learns, works, and plays in Lane County. We condemn actions that promote hate, xenophobia, racism, white supremacy, white nationalism, Anti-Semitism, Islamophobia, homophobia, transphobia, ableism, sexism, and other forms bigotry.
2. The Board of Commissioners recognizes the importance of elected officials responding publicly (e.g. press release, press conference) when groups or individuals experience hate and bias activity in order for the affected communities to feel supported.
3. The Board of Commissioners applauds the recent state legislation SB577 requiring a system to track incidents of hate and bias and will work with staff to allocate resources and implement the system in conjunction with other jurisdictions.

**ADOPTED** this 11th day of February, 2020.



Heather Buch, Chair  
Lane County Board of Commissioners

APPROVED AS TO FORM

Date

1/31/2020

LANE COUNTY OFFICE OF LEGAL COUNSEL