



Seattle Human Rights Commission

1963 – 2014 • 50 years of championing human rights and fostering a just future

Resolution 14-3: Recognizing the Second Monday of October as Indigenous Peoples' Day

WHEREAS, all people are born free and equal in dignity and rights; and

WHEREAS, the City of Seattle was declared to be a Human Rights City on December 10, 2012, committing itself to protect, respect and fulfill the full range of inherent human rights for all as set forth in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and numerous other international human rights treaties; and

WHEREAS, the Seattle Human Rights Commission (the “Commission”) is committed to protecting and advocating for justice, human rights, and the equal treatment of all people who live and work in Seattle; and

WHEREAS, the United States ratified the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (“CERD”) in October 1994 and Article 7 of CERD requires States “to adopt immediate and effective measures, particularly in the field of teaching, education, culture and information with a view to combating prejudices which lead to racial discrimination and to promote understanding, tolerance and friendship”; and

WHEREAS, the United States endorsed the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (the “Declaration”) on December 16, 2010 and the Declaration recognizes that “indigenous peoples have suffered from historic injustices as a result of, inter alia, their colonization and dispossession of their lands, territories and resources”; and

WHEREAS, Article 15 of the Declaration recognizes the right of indigenous peoples “to the dignity and diversity of their cultures, traditions, histories and aspirations which shall be appropriately reflected in education and public information” and places an obligation on States to “take effective measures, in consultation and cooperation with the indigenous peoples concerned, to combat prejudice and eliminate discrimination and to promote tolerance, understanding and good relations among indigenous peoples and all other segments of society”; and

WHEREAS, the Commission recognizes that the indigenous peoples of the lands that would later become known as the Americas have occupied these lands since time immemorial; and

WHEREAS, the Commission recognizes that the celebration of Christopher Columbus and his alleged 1492 discovery of the lands that would later become known as the Americas works to celebrate an era of colonization and dispossession of indigenous peoples' homelands, as well as the decimation of entire groups of indigenous peoples from North and South America; and

WHEREAS, the Commission recognizes the dignity and diversity of the cultures, traditions, histories and aspirations of the City of Seattle's indigenous peoples; and

WHEREAS, the Commission honors the fact that our great City is built upon indigenous peoples' homelands; and

WHEREAS, the Commission seeks to combat prejudice and eliminate discrimination stemming from colonization and to promote tolerance, understanding and good relations among indigenous peoples and all other segments of our society; and

WHEREAS, the Commission values the contributions made to our City and our society through indigenous peoples' arts, knowledge, technology, science, philosophy, and culture; and

WHEREAS, the Commission promotes the closing of the equity gap for indigenous peoples through policies and practices of government entities, organizations, and other public institutions that reflect the experiences of indigenous peoples and honor our nation's indigenous roots, history, and contributions; and

WHEREAS, Indigenous Peoples' Day was first proposed in 1977 by a delegation of Native Nations to the United Nations-sponsored International Conference on Discrimination Against Indigenous Populations in the Americas; and

WHEREAS, in 1990 representatives from 120 indigenous nations at the First Continental Conference on 500 Years of Indian Resistance unanimously passed a resolution to transform Columbus Day into an occasion to strengthen the process of continental unity in a struggle towards liberation, and to reveal a more accurate historical record; and

WHEREAS, in 2011 the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians, representing 59 Tribes from Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Northern California, Western Montana and some Alaskan Tribes, passed resolution #11-00 to "Support to Change Columbus Day (2nd Monday of October) to Indigenous Peoples' Day"; and

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Commission declares its support for the City of Seattle's recognition of Indigenous Peoples' Day on the second Monday in October; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Commission encourages the Board of Directors for the Seattle Public Schools to mandate that the public schools of our City

teach about the history, culture, and governments of indigenous peoples of our state as set forth in H.B. 1495 and as elaborated on in the Since Time Immemorial Curriculum; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Commission encourages the Board of Directors for the Seattle Public Schools to mandate that the public schools of our City give special focus to the history, culture, and governments of indigenous peoples on the second Monday in October.

Adopted by the Seattle Human Right Commission on June 5, 2014.



Sarah Bishop, Co-Chair



Ethel Branch, Co-Chair