

Resolution Declaring Racism a Public Health Issue in California

This measure would recognize that racism and oppression has dramatically affected the populations who experienced slavery, genocide, and forced relocation and continues to contribute to intergenerational/historical trauma in millions of citizens in the State of California.

WHEREAS, Racist acts has created dramatic physical, emotional, and mental harm in millions of current citizens in the State of California through Historical Trauma; and

WHEREAS, This harm has contributed to Racism, Racial Stress, Racial Microaggressions, Psychological Trauma, Historical Trauma, and Internalized Racism; and

WHEREAS, communities of color are disproportionately impacted by social determinants of health, such as: increased exposure to lead, poor air quality, lack of safe places to walk, bike, or run, and inadequate health education; and

WHEREAS, race is a social construction with no biologic basis; and

WHEREAS, racism is a social system with multiple dimensions, including individual racism, which is internalized or interpersonal, and systemic racism, which is institutional or structural, and is a system of structuring opportunity, and assigning value based on the social interpretation of how one looks; and

WHEREAS, systemic racism unfairly disadvantages some individuals and communities, unfairly advantages other individuals and communities, and depletes the strength of the whole society through the waste of human resources; and

WHEREAS, racism causes persistent racial discrimination in housing, education, employment, transportation, and criminal justice, and an emerging body of research demonstrates that racism is a social determinant of health; and

WHEREAS, Enslavement and slavery, civil and domestic violence, sexual abuse, and extreme poverty are also sources of trauma that can be transferred to subsequent generations; and

WHEREAS, This phenomenon has been reported in the descendants of students at American Indian boarding schools, who were removed from their parents and extended family and lacked models for parenting as a result. Being punished for speaking their native language and forbidden from practicing traditional rituals had a traumatic effect on many students; and

WHEREAS, A growing body of evidence shows that reconnecting people to the vibrant strengths of their ancestry and culture, helping people process the grief of past traumas, and creating new historical narratives can have healing effects for those experiencing historical trauma; and

WHEREAS, For many cultures illness is caused by being out of balance emotionally, spiritually, mentally or physically. Trauma, too, can cause imbalances that lead to physical illness by disrupting the body's natural rhythms that maintain wellness; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Santa Clara County Democratic Party actively participate in the dismantling of Racism; and be it further

Resolved, That the Santa Clara County Democratic Party will:

- Assess internal policies and procedures to make sure racial equity is a core element of the party.
- Work to create an inclusive organization and identify specific activities to increase diversity.
- Incorporate inclusion and equity, and offer educational training to expand members' understanding of how racism affects people.
- Advocate for policies that improve health in communities of color.
- Encourage other local, state and national entities to recognize racism as a public health crisis; and be it further

Resolved, That the Santa Clara County Democratic Party calls on appropriate legislative committees of both houses of the California state legislature to hold hearings regarding Racism as a public health issue and to produce legislation that will address the issue.

Submitted by Shay Franco-Clausen, Linda Alexander, and Tony Alexander

Adopted by the Santa Clara County Democratic Central Committee on June 4, 2020