

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, race is a social construct with no biological basis; and

WHEREAS, the Los Angeles City Council has a demonstrated track record of promoting racial equity, inclusion and diversity in all aspects of city government. This commitment is most recently exemplified in the creation of a Civil and Human Rights Commission as well as moving forward to open an Office of Racial Equity; and

WHEREAS, these significant initiatives recognize racism as a root cause of poverty and constricted economic mobility; and

WHEREAS, racism is a social system with multiple dimensions: individual racism that is internalized or interpersonal; systemic racism that 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, racism unfairly disadvantages specific individuals and communities, while unfairly giving advantages to other individuals and communities, and saps the strength of the whole society through the waste of human resources, and the City of Los Angeles' collective prosperity depends upon the equitable access to opportunity for every resident regardless of the color of their skin; and

WHEREAS, racism causes persistent discrimination and disparate outcomes in many areas of life, including housing, education, employment and criminal justice; and an emerging body of research demonstrates that racism itself is a social determinant of health; and

WHEREAS, across LA County, a third of black households experience severe rent burdens. In South LA, the share of black households experiencing severe rent burden is about 50 percent. While African Americans make up 29 percent of LA County's jail population, this is an overly disproportionate share compared to their proportion of the overall county population of about 8 percent. African Americans also make up 42 percent of the homeless population; and

WHEREAS, the Los Angeles City Council has committed to the elimination of racial disparities in the criminal justice system, to prioritize racial equity in our decision making processes, to acknowledge that communities of color have borne the burdens of inequitable social, environmental, economic, and criminal justice policies practices and investments, to understand that the legacy of these inequitable policies has caused deep disparities, harm, and mistrust, and to recognize that racial equity is realized when and only when race can no longer be used to predict life outcomes; and

WHEREAS, racism and segregation in Los Angeles have also exacerbated a health divide resulting in Black and Latinx residents having lower life expectancies than White residents; being far more likely than other races to die prematurely (before the age of 75); and to die of heart disease or stroke. Black and Latinx residents also have higher levels of infant mortality, lower birth weights, are more likely to be overweight or obese, have adult diabetes, and have long-term complications from diabetes; and

WHEREAS, communities of color, working class residents, and those that suffer from disabilities, are more likely to experience poor health outcomes as a consequence of their social determinants of health — health inequities stemming from economic stability, education, physical environment, food and access to health care systems; and

WHEREAS, a contemporary example of such disparity is highlighted by the coronavirus data in the County of Los Angeles, Black residents are hospitalized at twice the rate of other demographic



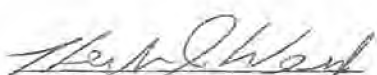
groups and preliminary data in the County of Los Angeles suggests that African Americans are dying at a disproportionately higher rate from the disease; and

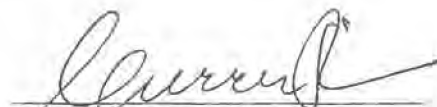
WHEREAS, more than 100 studies have linked racism to worse health outcomes; and


NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that upon adoption of this resolution, the Los Angeles City Council:


1. Asserts that racism is a public health crisis affecting our entire city.
2. Conduct an assessment of internal City policy and procedures, starting with the annual budget process, to ensure racial justice is a core element of city government, led by the City Council with assistance from the Human Relations Commission.
3. Work to progress as an equity and justice-oriented organization, to identify specific activities to further enhance diversity and to ensure antiracism principles across City government.
4. Promote equity through all policies and enhance educational efforts aimed at understanding, addressing and dismantling racism and how it affects delivery of human and social services, economic development and public safety.
5. Continue to advocate locally for relevant policies that improve health in communities of color, and supports local, state, regional, and federal initiatives that advance efforts to dismantle systemic racism.
6. Further work to solidify alliances and partnerships with other organizations that are confronting racism and encourage other local, state, regional and national entities to recognize racism as a public health crisis.
7. Support community efforts to amplify issues of racism and engage actively and authentically with communities of color wherever they live.
8. To always promote and support policies that prioritize the health of all people, especially people of color by mitigating exposure to adverse childhood experiences.
9. Encourage racial equity training among all community partners, grantees, vendors and contractors; and,
10. Identify clear goals and objectives, including periodic reports to assess progress and capitalize on opportunities to further advance racial equity.

PRESENTED BY:


HERB J. WESSON JR.
Councilmember, 10th District


CURREN D. PRICE
Councilmember, 9th District


MARQUEECE HARRIS-DAWSON
Councilmember, 8th District

SECONDED BY: 

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