

Subject: Endorsement to Ban the Caste in the City of Seattle

Date: Friday, February 10, 2023 at 8:07:29 PM Pacific Standard Time

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To: LEG_CouncilMembers <council@seattle.gov>

CAUTION: External Email

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Education Society, Fremont, California endorses the caste ordinance being proposed in the Seattle City Council. We are a group of erstwhile caste-oppressed people who were emancipated by Dr. Ambedkar. We had to convert to Buddhism to escape caste oppression. We are happy that Seattle City will be the first city to adopt a resolution banning Caste Discrimination. Taking up such an ordinance is the need of the hour since caste discrimination is present and thriving in the US. The oppressor caste people will deny they practice caste or even the existence of caste. In fact, that is their first defense. If that doesn't work, they will argue that caste is a British construct. These are all plain lies. They will argue that they will become a suspect if the prevention of caste discrimination ordinance is passed. It is like saying white people will be suspect if race-based discrimination is banned. Caste is so much ingrained in the mind of the South Asian diaspora that in the first few meetings, they want to find your caste so that they can decide whether to include or exclude you from their social circles.

Passage of the Caste Ordinance will force organizations to educate and sensitize employees to understand how caste bias operates and also will provide much-needed teeth for the victims of caste discrimination to confront the perpetrators of caste violence. Dr. Ambedkar Education Aid Society is thankful to the Citizens of Seattle Indian Americans (CSIA) for taking the lead and our special thanks to city councilor Kshama Sawant.

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