**RPC-2026-008**

**The importance of a safe environment for political discourse in our society**

**Whereas**, free speech and open discussion are pillars of representative democracy. These require a safe environment for the free exchange of ideas which is critical for improving policies that directly affect our lives;

**Whereas**, political intimidation and violence are never appropriate and should be condemned by all free people without equivocation. There are many types of political violence including deliberate use of physical force or verbal aggression with the purpose of coercing an elected official into not holding true to their purpose. This includes assaults, threats, or harassment aimed at elected officials and community leaders;

**Whereas**, whether targeting activists or elected officials, it is our duty as Americans to oppose all intimidation and silencing of political discourse. This requires both empathy and understanding of different views, but also a firm stand against tactics that cross a line into fear, intimidation, or violence regardless of the source or the target;

**Whereas**, candidates and elected officials of color endure political violence and intimidation on a regular basis, a reality that frequently goes unnoticed, unrecorded, and unaddressed;

**Whereas**, a recent incident involving Sen. Sollman reminds us that political violence takes many forms and can happen to any of us during respectful civic engagement.

**Whereas**, Elected officials should continue to listen to constituents and discuss policies, needs, and concerns at open houses, meetings, coffee hours, and more. This conversation requires a safe environment for constituents to participate in and share issues with their elected leaders;

**Therefore**, Washington County Democrats stand resolved that:

1) Our public square must remain free of intimidation and violence in order that we may all hear the voices of our entire community so that government can better serve the people;
2) Elected officials, community leaders, and activists should all respect each other's role in good governance and protect our community from violence and intimidation that can stifle political discussion or threaten individual's safety;
3) We stand with Oregon's leaders recent statements and state clearly:

We urge Oregonians of every political perspective to reject intimidation and violence and to help maintain a political culture where people can disagree openly and safely. We respect

the role of law enforcement and the courts in addressing such issues when allegations arise. We support our elected officials in holding true to their purpose, which means being free from fear and intimidation from political violence.