

Fernando Martinez
Testifying before the WA State Civil Rights & Judiciary Committee
In-Favor of I-1000
April 18, 2019

Good morning my name is Fernando Martinez, President and CEO of the Northwest Mountain Minority Supplier Development Council. We are a nonprofit organization whose mission is to “Foster an environment that creates opportunity and builds economic value.” We are here in support of I-1000.

In 1997 the State of WA was awarding >14% of its spend with diverse businesses, more specifically minority and women owned businesses. After passage of I-200 in November of 1998 and within a year that spend dwindled to 3%, and, within the next year it plummeted to <1%. We lost businesses, we lost employees, and we lost economic vitality within our communities of color. We continue to oppose I-200 because of its legislative supported bias/institutionalized racism. State buyers and other public agencies along with their contractors ride I-200 as the reason why they cannot include minorities. In fact, it enables and perpetuates racism.

Today in the State of WA we represent and support over 150 Minority Business Enterprises. The vitality these businesses represent is imperative to our communities of color:

Northwest Mountain MSDC 2017 Economic Impact Study

150 Minority Business Enterprises	Direct	Indirect	Aggregated
Annual Revenues	\$3.25 Billion	\$2.01 Billion	\$5.25 Billion
Annual Salaries	\$404 Million	\$1.9 Billion	\$2.3 Billion
Taxes (Local, State, Federal)	\$491 Million	\$206 Million	\$697 Million
Employees (50% are employees of color)	8,328	29,980	38,303

The WA State Legislature can further and positively impact these results by passing I-1000.

The success of Minority Business Enterprises is primarily in the private sector simply because I-200 facilitates the process for both buyers and contractors to act in a biased manner. The conversation here and outside the capitol hovers about “We must build private and public partnerships and alliances.” As long as I-200 is not amended – this conversation is moot.

I support and urge the legislature to reverse this practice and amend I-200 by passing I-1000.

Thank you!