

RESOLUTION NO: _____

AFFIRMING CONFIDENCE IN ELECTION RESULTS

WHEREAS, democracy cannot function without public confidence in election results;
and,

WHEREAS, absentee voting by mail has been used in most US states for decades, and is an established, safe, and legitimate way to conduct elections; and

WHEREAS, the State of Oregon has used voting by mail in federal elections since 1995;
and

WHEREAS, the State of Washington used voting by mail for decades; and

WHEREAS, as documented in Exhibit A, US Department of Justice study of incidents and complaints reported to state election agencies found criminal voter fraud rare and episodic;
and

WHEREAS, as documented in Exhibit A, another study of voting by mail matching voted absentee ballots to death records found no evidence that election fraud was committed under the auspices of deceased registrants; and

WHEREAS, as documented in Exhibit A, another study of data obtained from the California Secretary of State's Election Fraud Unit, spanning 1994 – 2003, identified 1285 fraud complaints, most of which involved registration issues. Only 13 involved voting by mail; and

WHEREAS, as documented in Exhibit A, during that decade when there were only 13 identified allegations of absentee vote fraud in California, approximately 25,000,000 absentee votes were cast in California by mail; and

WHEREAS, as documented in Exhibit A, yet another study based on an exhaustive public records search found that from 2000 – 2012 the number of voter fraud cases in the US was "infinitesimal." Of this infinitesimal amount there were 491 cases of absentee ballot fraud; and

WHEREAS, that study identified 491 documented cases out of hundreds of millions of ballots cast; and

WHEREAS, as documented in Exhibit A, yet another study searching LexisNexis for reported incidences of criminal cases of election fraud between 2000 and 2005 found "only nine cases" that "involved a relatively small number of votes," largely isolated in local elections in the US south, where few votes were cast; and

WHEREAS, given these observations, it may be more likely for an American to be struck by lightning than to commit voter fraud; and

WHEREAS, as documented in Exhibit A, yet another study analyzing voting from 1996 to 2018 in the United States concluded that voting by mail has neutral partisan effects, favoring neither political party; and

WHEREAS, the head of the US Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency overseeing US elections stated the 2020 election, including voting by mail, was the most secure in US history; and

WHEREAS, the Secretary of State of Washington has likewise expressed full confidence in voting by mail and election results in this state in 2020, consistent with fair and legitimate results in this state in previous years; and

WHEREAS, a majority of members of the Whatcom County Council have, at various points, had opportunities to serve on the Whatcom County Canvassing Board, including members affiliated with both major political parties; and

WHEREAS, service on the Canvassing Board provides Council with first-hand exposure to unbiased, neutral, professional administration of elections in the United States; and

WHEREAS, as documented in Exhibit A, research finds that public perceptions of voter fraud, and media accounts of voter fraud, reflect perceived levels of voter fraud far in excess of the rare, actual occurrences of voter fraud; and

WHEREAS, as documented in Exhibit A, these public perceptions of fraud reflect allegations of fraud promoted by partisan officials, rather than actual occurrences of fraud that may affect election results; and

WHEREAS, the outgoing President of the United States has contributed these perceptions by claiming, without evidence, that the 2016 election results were "rigged", and illegitimate; and

WHEREAS, the outgoing President of the United States is further contributing to delegitimizing America's democratic processes by claiming, without evidence, that results of the 2020 presidential election were fraudulent by promoting baseless claims about alleged voter fraud committed via voting by mail; and

WHEREAS, a major party candidate for Governor of Washington, and the candidate's campaign manager are also alleging, without evidence, that Washington's 2020 election results were fraudulent, and illegitimate; and

WHEREAS, a state legislator representing Whatcom County notes having "deep suspicions" in Washington state election results due to voting-by-mail, and claims that voting by mail results in distrust of elections in Washington state that can only be cured by returning to in-person voting, and

WHEREAS, it is vital to democracy and democratic norms that elected officials of any political affiliation instill confidence in elections by affirming that election results are true and legitimate, regardless of who is found to win or lose; so

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Whatcom County Council affirms its confidence in the validity and integrity of votes cast by mail in Whatcom County, and in Washington state; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Whatcom County Council affirms that election results certified by the Whatcom County Auditor and the Washington Secretary of State, accurately reflect the results of free and fair elections untainted by fraud; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Whatcom County Council affirms that 2020 election results in other states and localities using voting by mail likewise accurately reflect the results of a free and fair elections, as did results from those states in recent, previous elections.

APPROVED this day of ____ of _____, 2020.

ATTEST:

WHATCOM COUNTY HEALTH BOARD CHAIR
WHATCOM COUNTY, WASHINGTON

Dana Brown-Davis, Clerk of the Council

Barry Buchanan, Council Chair

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

Civil Deputy Prosecutor

Exhibit A

Sources:

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Walter Cronkite School of Journalism and Mass Communication, Arizona State University. <https://votingrights.news21.com/article/about/>