
From: Lacombe, Beatriz
Sent: Saturday, February 18, 2023 11:16 AM
To: Venkataraman, Asha; City Clerk Filing
Cc: Virdone, Ted; Kshama Sawant; Adam Ziemkowski
Subject: FW: An end to caste discrimination

From: Akhil Kang <ak2565@cornell.edu>
Date: Thursday, February 16, 2023 at 6:27 PM
To: LEG_CouncilMembers <council@seattle.gov>
Subject: An end to caste discrimination

CAUTION: External Email

Hello

I am writing to voice my support for recognizing caste as a valid, legitimate ground for discrimination and urge the City Council to vote YES for the legislation in question.

I am a first generation dalit and queer person who is pursuing PhD in Anthropology at Cornell University. I am the first ever dalit student to be admitted into this program. Ever since I began my program in 2018 I have faced a lot of micro-aggressions and silencing by the upper caste faculty and student community here and elsewhere. It is wrong to assume that just because the context here is completely different from India and thus, caste as a marker loses its significance. However, caste is a reality that moves across boundaries and plays not just in how the South Asian community connects with each other but also with the world. From mentoring only community members from their own caste in academia, to the tech world and informal labor, caste continues to fracture the worlds around us in cruel ways. Caste is also at play within dangerous right wing mobilizing. In fact, it is not secret that historically and in contemporary times upper caste Hindus align themselves with Nazi ideologies of Aryan-ness.

This move by the Council would be historic and benefit and help dalits in the US for generations to come and give us the voice to recognize our pain, and more importantly empower that pain.

Regards
Akhil