
From: Lacombe, Beatriz
Sent: Monday, February 20, 2023 10:03 AM
To: Venkataraman, Asha
Cc: City Clerk Filing; Virdone, Ted
Subject: FW: Dalit Bahujans of South Asia Oppose the ill-motivated caste ordinance. Vote No

From: Ambedkar Phule Dalits and Bahujans <reach.apnadb@gmail.com>
Date: Tuesday, February 7, 2023 at 10:27 AM
To: LEG_CouncilMembers <council@seattle.gov>
Subject: Dalit Bahujans of South Asia Oppose the ill-motivated caste ordinance. Vote No

CAUTION: External Email

7th Feb, 2023

Ambedkar Phule Network of American Dalits and Bahujans

Dear Council Members
Seattle City Council, WA.

**Sub: Dalit Bahujans of South Asia Oppose the ill-motivated caste ordinance.
Vote no!**

We write as a group of American Dalit and Bahujan individuals of South Asian origin. Most of us come from communities designated as protected classes by the Indian Constitution due to the socio-economic deprivations faced by our communities (scheduled caste, scheduled tribes and other backward classes). We are contacting you to express our serious concerns about the Commission's recent discussions on the topic of oppressed castes (i.e., Dalits, Bahujans) and we respectfully request that caste **not** be added as a specific protected category.

Please understand that the council members who are pushing the hate in the name of resolution, and their allies - do not stand for us - the Dalits and Bahujans.

We are dismayed to see politically motivated council members tied to anti-Dalit and anti-Hindu hate-groups misusing and misappropriating our identity and the history of our communities, to spread hate in this beautiful city and beyond. They have made sweeping generalizations and sought to deny our place in South Asian history. They make baseless claims about us and about the prevalence of caste discrimination in the US. They have tried to hide or replace the role our ancestors have played in the history of many South Asian communities.

The negative impact of these groups has become clear in the last couple years, as we have seen our voices, our pain, our stories completely silenced and ignored in favor of the narrative created by a select few privileged folks among our communities, usually those who have already gained access to the corridors of power in academia, media and corporations. Their generalizations, anecdotes, and numbers, in no way comport with our

experiences and we **ask that our voices be heard** and counted as you seek to understand and help our community.

The inclusion of “caste” as a specific protected category would unfairly single out and target all people of South Asian descent and origin -- and that includes us Dalits and Bahujans. If passed, this law will make Seattle employers **less likely to hire South Asians** as a whole, which will have the unintended consequence of reducing employment/opportunities of all South Asians including us Dalits/Bahujans.

The ordinance proposes to single us and our community out on the basis of race, ethnicity, ancestry, national origin, and religion which violates our rights to equal protection and due process under both the US Constitution and Washington law.

As such, we implore you to **not adopt** any ill-motivated policies or resolutions that would unfairly target the South Asians and to forgo public hearings that are sure to insert division and discord to our otherwise thriving, diverse, and pluralistic communities.

Sincerely,
Vaishali V., President
Ambedkar Phule Network of American Dalits and Bahujans.
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