

Resolution Calling for the Resignation of Seattle Mayor Jenny Durkan

WHEREAS the 2018 Washington State Democratic Party platform calls for “police forces to be demilitarized, be held accountable for abusive practices, and exercise restraint in their dealing with peaceful assemblies and protests;” and

WHEREAS In 2012 SPD entered into a “consent decree” with the federal government due to a [“a pattern or practice of excessive force that violates the U.S. Constitution and federal law”](#); and

WHEREAS The Seattle Police Department (“SPD”) has committed repeated violence against the people of Seattle including the murders of Charleena Lyles, Che Taylor, Shaun Fuhr, Andrew Law, Austin Derby, Cody Spafford, Damarius Butts, Eric Evans, Henry Lee, Sr., Jack Keewatinawin, James Anderson, Joel Reuter, John T. Williams, Larry Flynn, Leonid Kalyuzhnyy, Martin Duckworth, Michael Taylor, Mike Kwan-Yu Chen, Raymond Azevedo, Sam Smith, Shun Ma, and Stephen Johnston; and

WHEREAS The murder of George Floyd by Minneapolis police has caused the people of Seattle to peacefully protest against systemic police violence against Black people nationwide and in our own city; and

WHEREAS the [Seattle Office of Professional Accountability in 2015](#) and the [Seattle Community Police Commission in 2016](#) both recommended a comprehensive review of the use of “blast balls” and of pepper spray specifically in response to Black Lives Matter protests, [a review that has not been done](#) due to SPD intransigence; and

WHEREAS SPD has for many years and again in the past week repeatedly targeted [peaceful protesters](#), [children](#), and [reporters](#) with [tear gas](#), [pepper spray](#), flash bangs, and other “crowd control” measures; and

WHEREAS SPD has repeatedly fired tear gas, a chemical weapon banned in warfare by the Geneva Convention, at peaceful protesters in [the middle of a residential neighborhood](#) harming both the protesters and nearby residents, including an [infant in their crib](#); and

WHEREAS in [2015 the Seattle Office of Professional Accountability](#) recommended “SPD find an appropriate means to affix the name and/or the serial number of each officer on the front and back of the outermost garment or body annor, along with the helmet. This should be done in a large and highly visible manner.”; and

WHEREAS not only have name and/or serial number not been displayed in a highly visible manner, but also in the protests starting May 30 SPD officers have obscured their identities by covering their [badge numbers](#) with tape and even also covering their [names](#); and

WHEREAS both Mayor Durkan and Chief Best for days downplayed and rebuffed community demands that tape be removed immediately from badge numbers to allow identification, saying “that won’t happen overnight”; and

WHEREAS Mayor Durkan on May 31 [expressed sadness about property destruction](#) but expressed no sadness or regret for the hundreds of people injured and traumatized by the SPD violence; and

WHEREAS Mayor Durkan has repeatedly used her powers to declare restrictive curfews which infringe on the First Amendment rights of protesters to peacefully assemble; have provided a justification for police to crack down on protesters; and are unevenly enforced across the city; and

WHEREAS Mayor Durkan has shown no ability or desire to rein in the SPD or protect peaceful protesters and has defended officers obscuring their badge numbers, insisting that [“Everyone in the city should have pride in \[SPD’s\] work”](#); and

WHEREAS on June 1 SPD aggressively initiated violence against peaceful protesters and Mayor Durkan refused to condemn the violence that violated her standard that “force must be rare, it must be necessary and it must be proportional”; and

WHEREAS Mayor Durkan has collaborated with Donald Trump’s Justice Department in an [attempt to lift](#) the consent decree [before necessary accountability measures are in place](#); and despite the police violence from May 30 - June 1, she maintained through June 2 her resolve to lift the consent decree; and

WHEREAS Over the course of her term Mayor Durkan has escalated the cruel and wasteful practice of “sweeping” homeless encampments without providing shelter to those who are swept, resulting in the destruction of their belongings and doing nothing but forcing them to camp in another part of the city; and

WHEREAS Mayor Durkan has continued the practice of homeless “sweeps” in the middle of a public health emergency against guidance from the Centers for Disease Control that says “If individual housing options are not available, allow people who are living unsheltered or in encampments to remain where they are.”; and

WHEREAS Article V, Section 2 of the [Seattle City Charter](#) states that “The Mayor shall see that the laws in the City are enforced, and shall direct and control all subordinate officers of the City, ... and shall maintain peace and order in the City;” and

WHEREAS Mayor Durkan has failed to uphold the values of the Democratic Party, has willfully violated her duty to keep the people of Seattle safe, her duty to direct and control all subordinate officers of the City, and her duty to maintain peace and order in the City; and

WHEREAS Mayor Durkan has gravely violated the sentiments and accepted standards of our community by permitting and excusing the targeting of peaceful protesters and children, for using tear gas in residential neighborhoods, for diminishing repeated calls for increased police accountability, and for infringing upon first amendment rights; and

WHEREAS Mayor Jenny Durkan has lost the trust of the people of Seattle to enact meaningful and lasting reform of the Seattle Police Department through [defunding SPD](#) to allow expanded investments in community-led health and safety strategies, in affordable housing, in

community-based anti-violence programs, in trauma services and treatment, in universal childcare, in free public transit, and in other non-police approaches to social problems;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the 43rd District Democrats call on Seattle Mayor Jenny Durkan to immediately resign as Mayor; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that in the event that Mayor Durkan refuses to step down as Mayor the 43rd District Democrats call on the City Council to use their powers of impeachment to remove her from office; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that copies of this resolution be publicized and sent to the office of the Mayor and all Seattle City Council members.

Submitted for consideration by the 43rd Legislative District Democrats Executive board at the June 16, 2020 meeting of the 43rd District Democrats.