

Equality

“The America we want for our kids – a rising America where honest work is plentiful and communities are strong; where prosperity is widely shared and opportunity for all lets us go as far as our dreams and toil will take us – none of it is easy. But if we work together; if we summon what is best in us, with our feet planted firmly in today but our eyes cast towards tomorrow – I know it’s within our reach.”

–President Barack Obama

Horry County Democrats fully endorse the Democratic Party vision that everyone deserves an equal opportunity to make the most of life. That message is especially important when nearly half of the American people believe our president is actually a racist.

Opportunity should not be limited by race, ethnicity, national origin, language, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, or disability status. Equality means the ability to live a dignified life, with access to decent education, competent health care, and meaningful employment at fair wages.

Equal opportunity is inextricably linked to human rights.



We advocate for and support efforts to:

- Prohibit discrimination based on race, education, or economic circumstances
- End prejudice based on sexual orientation or gender identity
- Eliminate barriers preventing disabled persons from full participation in society
- Ensure our criminal justice system is fair and equitable for everyone
- Put an end to modern day slavery – human trafficking in labor and the sex trade

Democrats oppose discrimination of all forms. Period.

The Trump Fear Factor

It seems that every day we read about incidents where white people, often women, have called the police reporting people of color for doing the most mundane things: waiting in a Starbucks, touring a college campus, sleeping in a college dorm room or grilling in a public park. In each incident, after being questioned by the police, the people of color were released with no charges filed.

The fact that no charges were filed in any of these cases isn't surprising, nor is it surprising that there's been a marked increase in the number of such incidents, particularly given the nationalist

fear mongering and racism stoked by the Trump administration in the language, tone and tenor of remarks about people of color.

In public remarks and tweets, Trump has vilified people of color at nearly every turn. The mostly black NFL players taking a knee in protest of social injustice and police brutality are "sons of

Solving the issues of discrimination based on race or other criteria, ending prejudices, eliminating barriers to success, making sure our criminal justice system is fair for all and ending human trafficking takes more than simply stating where we stand.



bitches.” Immigrants (he says Hispanic MS-13 gang members) are “animals,” and people from Haiti, El Salvador and Africa come from “shithole countries.”

Meanwhile, Trump defended white supremacists at a rally in Charlottesville last August, saying the group included “some very fine people.”

The message the president is sending very clearly is that people of color are unwelcomed.

What we see consistently from the highest levels of our government is an attempt to relegate people of color to second-class citizenship and dehumanization.

Horry County Democrats condemn this attitude, which is feeding latent bias that Trump is cynically leveraging to generate support from his “base.”

Unconscious or Explicit

So, is it any wonder then that some white women, who may have their own biases about people of color, are taking a cue from the president's example and instituting an overzealous, fear-based vigilante approach? Is it irrational fear, a manifestation of unconscious bias, or more explicit prejudices that cause them to make people of color feel uncomfortable and unwelcomed in any space?

Anyone who's watched the national news just once a week for the past three years has likely heard of at least one case of an unarmed black person being beaten or killed by a police officer. Encountering a person with black or brown skin is by itself a perceived threat to some law enforcement officers.

Thus, when a white individual calls the police on a person of color who is committing no crime, has made no threat and is simply being, it could have tragic consequences and endanger someone's life.

When law enforcement officers are called to intimidate or harass ordinary citizens of color for no justifiable cause, the people who make

the call should be held accountable for making a false report. Then, and only then, will people begin to think twice about weaponizing the police simply because their own prejudices make them feel uncomfortable around people of color.

This latent bias, whether it is founded in fear, in longstanding family attitudes, or whatever, is the elephant in the room that must be confronted. HCDP stands for action to help resolve these issues.

What can you do?

Let's work within our families, our schools, our churches, our community organizations to first recognize, and then confront and discuss these concerns. Take a leadership role. And when you spot incidents of such bias, call it out.

Whether bias is unconscious or explicit doesn't really matter, in the end. It is still discrimination and it is wrong. Let's find a path forward for the betterment of our entire community. Remember, we can't eliminate the elephant in the room unless we recognize it is there.

And let's replace those office holders who do nothing at best, and who encourage prejudices at worst, with men and women of good conscience who will work on behalf of all people.

We must end discrimination in all forms. That is the position of the Horry County Democratic Party.

Period.

Contributed by Bob Gatty and Stacy Fitzgerald