



Seattle Human Rights Commission

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Dear Honorable Councilmembers and Mayor Murray:

The Seattle Human Rights Commission condemns the derogatory gender-based comments and threats of violence toward Seattle City Councilmembers Bagshaw, Gonzalez, Herbold, Juarez, and Sawant that occurred after the May 2, 2016 City Council vote regarding the Occidental Avenue South street vacation. These comments reinforce a pattern of violence against women that violates fundamental human rights and should not be tolerated within the City of Seattle or elsewhere.

The female members of the Seattle City Council have the right to vote within their authority as elected officials without being targeted on the basis of their gender.

Article 3 of the UN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women states that “Women are entitled to the equal enjoyment and protection of all human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field. These rights include, inter alia: The right to life; The right to equality; The right to liberty and security of person; The right to equal protection under the law; The right to be free from all forms of discrimination; The right to the highest standard attainable of physical and mental health; The right to just and favourable conditions of work; The right not to be subjected to torture, or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.”

The Seattle Human Rights Commission calls for an end to gender-based threats and derogatory comments, and calls for investigation into the threats that have occurred in order to protect the safety and human rights of Seattle City Councilmembers Bagshaw, Gonzalez, Herbold, Juarez, and Sawant. Gender-based threats and derogatory comments debilitate civil discourse and have no place in a human rights city.

Signed,



Margaret Babayan, Co-Chair



Marcel Baugh, Co-Chair



Danielle Wallace, Co-Chair



Sarah Bishop, Commissioner