

Proclamation of Inclusion

State of Vermont Executive Department

WHEREAS,

Vermont and Vermonters have a rich history of celebrating freedom and diversity, including the abolition of slavery in 1777, activism in the abolitionist movement, our embrace of European immigrants to work in mines and quarries, recognition of same sex marriage; state recognition of Abenaki peoples; and protection of undocumented immigrants from potentially overreaching federal enforcement; and

WHEREAS,

despite Vermont's tradition of leadership in freedom and diversity, historically Vermont has been and still is one of the least racially and ethnically diverse states in the country; and

WHEREAS,

one of the silver linings to be found after the pandemic may be that remote work may continue to be well accepted and people have moved and are moving to Vermont bringing jobs, new skills and capabilities and cultural and racial diversity; and

WHEREAS,

people and families who have moved or who are moving to Vermont may inspire others to move as well, inevitably adding richness in diversity of history and experience to our State; and

WHEREAS,

with more vibrant communities, businesses and restaurants and cultural activities, facilities and resources, more of Vermont's young people will want to stay, work and raise their families in Vermont; and

WHEREAS,

it is essential for all to know, Vermont seeks to achieve equality and equity and to create a culture in which racial, ethnic and other cultural disparities are openly acknowledged and addressed and where no one person is more likely to experience society's benefits or burdens than any other person; and

WHEREAS,

the State of Vermont is committed to growing and nurturing a diverse society in which we want our youth to live and prosper; and

WHEREAS,

the State of Vermont is committed to identifying overt and implicit bias and systemic racism throughout State government systems and functions, and to eliminating racial, ethnic and other cultural disparities that may now exist within State government as one of the state's largest employers and as a provider of a variety of essential services to the public at large; and

WHEREAS,

the State of Vermont has demonstrated leadership and has achieved notable and laudable success in addressing racial and other disparities through the work of the Director of Racial Equity and the Racial Equity Advisory Panel, as well as the Governor's Racial Equity Task Force working to address systemic bias in our State systems and institutions, examine existing law on hate crimes, evaluate systems of support and look to increase civic participation among racially diverse populations; the Agency of Transportation through its Office of Civil Rights; the Agency of Education through partnerships with professional associations in anti-bias efforts; the Human Resources Department through its work building more inclusive representation in the State government workforce; the State's Human Rights Commission; and the Office of the Attorney General's Civil Rights Office; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Public Safety has provided leadership through its Fair and Impartial Policing Initiative, as well as comprehensive policy work on hiring and promotions, data collection, use of force, body worn cameras, greater transparency regarding improper conduct and attempts to achieve comprehensive law enforcement training modernization and cultural change.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Philip B. Scott, Governor, hereby proclaim as follows:

1. The State of Vermont formally condemns discrimination in all of its forms and welcomes all people who want to live and work and add richness to our State, regardless of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, gender identity or expression, age, or disability and will protect these classes to the fullest extent of the law.

2. Let the second week of May be known as Inclusion Week to emphasize these ongoing efforts to make Vermont a more inviting state for all people.

3. I call upon all Vermonters to denounce prejudice, to openly acknowledge and address our own implicit bias and welcome and celebrate all people, of all races, colors, religions, national origins, sex, gender identity or expression, ages, disabilities, and continue to work together to ensure every individual can live freely, equitably, and express their opinions free from fear, intolerance and prejudice.

Given under my hand and the Great Seal of the State of Vermont on this 7th day of May, A.D. 2021.

Philip B. Scott
Governor

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Philip B. Scott". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.