



### INTRODUCTION TO INITIATIVE 1776

The unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic has unmasked the discriminatory health, educational, employment and economic disparities which have long plagued seniors, women, persons with disabilities, persons of color, members of the LGBTQ+ community, military veterans, and other vulnerable communities in Washington state.

The Washington State Department of Health has reported in 2020:

- 56% of men dying from the novel coronavirus exceeded men's 50% of the state population.
- 52% of coronavirus infected women exceed women's 50% of the state population.
- Hispanics are 40% of the racially identifiable confirmed COVID-19 cases, while only 13% of the state's population.
- African Americans are 7% of the racially identifiable confirmed COVID-19 cases, nearly double their percentage of the state's population.
- Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islanders are 2% of the racially identifiable confirmed COVID-19 cases, double their percentage of the state's population.

In June, 2020, Dr. Terry Ross sponsored Initiative 1776 which achieves the following:

- **Requires Washington state to provide COVID-19 vaccines to all Washington residents who voluntarily give their fully informed consent for a vaccination, at no cost to the patient;**
- **Prohibits age discrimination** in public employment, public education & public contracting;
- **Redefines Affirmative Action** to require that all candidates must be qualified to receive public education, employment and contracting opportunities;
- **Defines preferential treatment** for the first time in state law;
- **Prohibits Quotas;** but allows **Goals & Timetables** to achieve Diversity;
- **Expands Affirmative Action to include all Veterans;**
- **Expands the terms sexual orientation and LGBTQ+ to all state anti-discrimination laws.**

I-1776 is urgently needed to prevent discriminatory laws and actions from increasing disparities and deaths in our most vulnerable communities during and after this public health emergency.