



RESOLUTION 2022-3

WHEREAS, in 1868, after the Civil War, the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution gave citizens “equal protection” under the law; and,

WHEREAS, the Alaska Territorial Legislature passed the Alaska Equal Rights Act of 1945 at the urging of Elizabeth Peratrovich, which made it illegal to discriminate in places of public accommodation based on race, and that all Alaskans shall have full “and equal” enjoyment of public places and businesses; and,

WHEREAS, Elizabeth Peratrovich gave an impassioned speech where she stated, “I would not have expected that I, who am barely out of savagery, would have to remind gentleman with five thousand years of recorded civilization behind them, of our Bill of Rights;” and,

WHEREAS, the term “human rights” was commonly used to refer to the categories of discriminatory conduct in the era following World War II, with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly in Paris on December 10, 1948; and,

WHEREAS, the modern “civil rights era” started in the mid-1950s, particularly sparked by the Supreme Court Decision *Brown v. Board of Education* in 1954; the arrest of Rosa Parks for refusing to give up her bus seat to a white man in Montgomery, Alabama, in 1955; and the “Little Rock Nine” who were black students who were met with extreme hostility when they tried to attend a formerly segregated school in 1957; and,

WHEREAS, President Eisenhower signed the Civil Rights Act into law in 1957; and,

WHEREAS, the Alaska Legislature created the Alaska State Commission for Human Rights (“ASCHR”) in 1963 when the term “human rights” remained *en vogue*; and,

WHEREAS, President Johnson signed the Civil Rights Act of 1964 into law guaranteeing equal employment for all; and,

WHEREAS, roughly half of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission’s Fair Employment Practices Agency use the term “human rights” in their titles, while the others typical refer to “equal” rights or “civil” rights; and,

WHEREAS, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights contains provisions related to criminal due process, privacy, travel, asylum, deprivation of property, freedom of speech, health, education, and other provisions that fall well outside ASCHR’s jurisdiction; and,

WHEREAS, Alaskans are often confused about ASCHR’s statutory function in fulfilling Article I, Section 3, of the Alaska Constitution, which is the section itself titled “Civil Rights;” and,

WHEREAS, the public has less perceived confusion about the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission’s function is through enforcing Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; and,

WHEREAS, Alaskans sometimes contact ASCHR asking about their “human rights” to food, clean water, and fresh air, which rarely involve civil rights or equal rights discrimination claims; and,

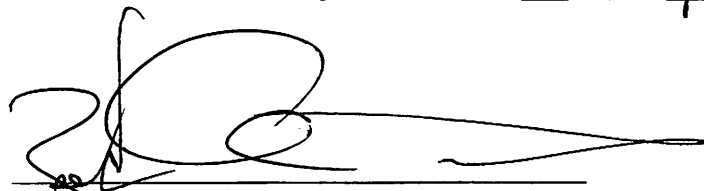
WHEREAS, ASCHR believes that changing the name to accurately reflect its function in a post-Civil Rights Era context will serve to help educate and inform the public about ASCHR’s legal mandate; and,

WHEREAS, most ASCHR publications are digital and are easily modified, therefore changing the name will cost little or nothing.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Alaska State Commission for Human Rights supports the Office of the Governor changing the name to incorporate “civil rights” or “equal rights” or “equal protection” of “equal opportunity,” and similarly renaming the Alaska Human Rights Act, AS 18.80 *et seq.*, as an effort to rebrand the agency in a manner that more closely aligns with its actual function given modern vernacular, and to avoid citizen confusion.

A copy of this resolution shall be forwarded to the Office of the Governor.

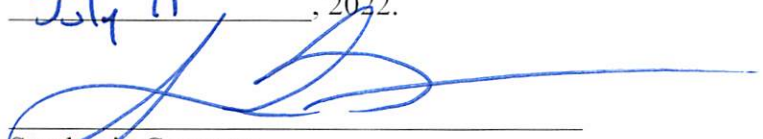
ADOPTED at Anchorage, Alaska, this 17 day of July, 2022



Zackary Gottshall
Chairperson
Alaska State Commission for Human Rights

I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution

2022-3 is a true and accurate copy of the
language adopted by the Commission on
July 11, 2022.



Stephanie Guerrero
Acting Secretary
Alaska State Commission for Human Rights