

Public Comment #37  
BOS Recd. 1-20-23

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**From:** ssimpkin@placerville.net  
**Sent:** Friday, January 20, 2023 12:06 PM  
**To:** BOS-Clerk of the Board  
**Cc:** Kim Dawson  
**Subject:** Letter to BOS regarding Human Rights Commission  
**Attachments:** BOS\_Letter\_01202023.pdf

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Please include this letter for the January 24 Board meeting.

Thank you,  
Susan Simpkin  
Human Rights Commission Chair

January 20, 2023

To the El Dorado County Board of Supervisors,

As you discuss the Human Rights Commission, I respectfully submit these thoughts.

The protection of fundamental human rights was foundational in the establishment of the United States nearly 250 years ago. The Commission's Purpose and Responsibilities, as defined and unanimously approved by the Board on 11/17/2020 (see page two, Ordinance 5134) support this principle. In establishing the Commission in 2018, the Board of Supervisors demonstrated belief that all are created equal. It recognized that in El Dorado County, group affiliation can subject individuals to bullying, harassment and harm which challenges this tenet. The Board took a stand for information and truth, contrary to the narrative, "We don't have human rights issues in El Dorado County." In developing a Human Rights Commission, our county government indicated to the electorate, many of whom are subject to prejudice and discrimination, "We see you. We recognize your struggles. We take your needs into consideration in our decision-making process." The Commission stands as a beacon of our government's core democratic values.

Commission guidelines are many. In our belief in, and fidelity to our Purpose and Responsibilities, Commission members have faithfully worked to make our broad understandings, personal experiences and deep commitment to human rights relevant in our county. By which factors does the Board determine a Commission a "failure"? How long is too long in efforts to agree on common cause, interpretation, and action? At what point should Dr. King have given up?

How can our Commission help the Board in its mission to promote democracy? What information can our Commission add to the discussion that will assist in developing and carrying out policy that directly helps the lives of County citizens?

It is my request that the Board continue to support this young Commission. Let us fix what we can, understand what we value in common, and continue to move forward, empowered with the vision that each person in El Dorado County feels safe enough to stay. There is much work left to do.

With respect,

Susan Simpkin  
EDC Human Rights Commission Chair

2.20 Ord  
11/17/20



PAGE ONE (excerpt)

**ORDINANCE NO. 5134**

**THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE COUNTY OF EL DORADO DOES ORDAIN AS FOLLOWS:**

Section 1. Article XIV. - Human Rights Commission, Chapter 2.20.1100 is hereby added to the El Dorado County Ordinance Code as follows:

This article shall be known as the Human Rights Commission Ordinance.

Sec. 2.20.1100. - Established.

The El Dorado County Commission on Human Rights is hereby established pursuant to Government Code §§ 50260-50265. This article shall be known as the Human Rights Commission Ordinance.

Sec. 2.20.1101. - Purpose.

The purpose of the Human Rights Commission is to promote tolerance and mutual respect among all persons, and to foster peaceful relations in the interest of preserving the public peace among residents of different races, religions, national origins, and the other characteristics listed in Government Code § 11135.

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PAGE THREE (excerpt)

Sec. 2.20.1108. - Commission responsibilities.

It shall be the responsibility of the Commission:

A. To foster mutual respect and understanding among all groups of people, including people subject to prejudice and discrimination due to race, creed, color, national origin, ancestry, physical disability, mental disability, marital status, gender, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, civic interest, or any other factors.

B. To make any studies in any field of human relationships in the County as, in the judgment of the Commission, will aid in effectuating its general purposes.

C. To conduct and recommend any educational programs as, in the judgment of the Commission, will increase good will among inhabitants of the County and open new opportunities into all phases of community life for all inhabitants.

D. To hold public meetings in the interest of the constructive resolution of tensions, prejudice, and discrimination among or between groups of people, including people subject to prejudice and discrimination due to race, religious creed, color, national origin, ancestry, physical disability, mental disability, marital status, gender, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status or civic interest.

E. To submit regular and special meeting minutes to the County Office of the Clerk of the Board within ten business days following a meeting and to submit an annual report to the Board.