

June 12, 2020

Chair Podlodowski, Chair Pedersen and Chair Fitzgibbon,

We are the Political Consultants of Color Coalition.

The Washington Democratic Party, House Democratic Campaign Committee (HDCC), Washington Senate Democratic Committee (WSDC) and allied organizations spend millions of dollars with consultants and contractors every election cycle in Washington state. While BIPOC consultants represent almost a third of the working political consultants in the state, the vast majority of that money goes to white consulting firms. In 2018, BIPOC consultants only worked on 5% of legislative races. The decision to not work with firms of color has been made despite several firms of color in existence, and actively pursuing contracts, during this time. From 2018 through 2020, these BIPOC owned firms saw tremendous success at the ballot box - especially relative to their white peers - but were still left out of any of the campaigns and races, which were identified by the party as priority races. ***These decisions reflect a deeply broken campaign apparatus that systematically steers contracts and compensation towards white consultants and away from consultants of color.***

Therefore, we make the following demands of the House Democratic Campaign Committee (HDCC) and Washington Senate Democratic Committee (WSDC):

- Each election cycle, the HDCC and WSDC must email the criteria for inclusion on the Preferred Consultant roster, at least 21 days before final selection, to all general consultants who worked on any Democratic legislative campaign in the prior two cycles. If a general consultant from a Democratic legislative campaign in the prior two cycles is deemed ineligible for inclusion in the Preferred Consultant roster, they must be notified in writing before the publication of the final Preferred Consultant roster.
- The self-identified race of consultants must be included on the Preferred Consultant roster that is provided to candidate campaigns.
- The HDCC and WSDC must publicly report the racial composition of their Executive Boards, staff and contracted workers by March 10th of each active campaign cycle.
- There must be pay equity between BIPOC and white consultants and contractors.
- HDCC- and WSDC-supported campaigns must report the percentage of their expenditures spent with BIPOC consultants and contractors within 5 days of each expenditure reporting deadline. This reporting should be a publicly facing dashboard that is easily understood by both campaigns and the voters.
- The HDCC and WSDC must sunset their support of incumbents after three election cycles in the House and two election cycles in the Senate.

We make the following demands of Washington State Democrats, County Democratic organizations, and Legislative District organizations:

- Organizations must report the percentage of their expenditures spent with BIPOC consultants and contractors within 5 days of each expenditure reporting deadline. This reporting should be a publicly facing dashboard that is easily understood by both campaigns and voters.

- Organizations must publicly report the racial composition of executive leadership, Precinct Committee Officers and full time and part-time staff by March 10th of each current campaign cycle.
- There must be pay equity between BIPOC and white consultants and contractors.
- HDCC- and WSDC-supported campaigns must confirm that any contractor accumulating \$50,000 or more in aggregate billings, in the active campaign cycle, has certified that they will hire and train BIPOC through paid positions.

We make the following demands of ally organizations, including unions, and progressive non-profit organizations:

- Organizations will report the percentage of their expenditures spent with BIPOC consultants and contractors within 5 days of each expenditure reporting deadline. This reporting should be a publicly facing dashboard that is easily understood by both campaigns and voters.
- Organizations must publicly report the racial composition of executive leadership, Precinct Committee Officers and full time and part-time staff by March 10th of each current campaign cycle.
- There must be pay equity between BIPOC and white consultants and contractors.
- HDCC- and WSDC-supported campaigns must confirm that any contractor accumulating \$50,000 or more in aggregate billings, in the active campaign cycle, has certified that they will hire and train BIPOC through paid positions.

We, the undersigned, acknowledge that this is a substantive departure from “business as usual” for Democratic Party operations. But, as the Party has grown in its reliance on the labor and support of BIPOC, we believe it is the reasonable next step to build an infrastructure that is representative of our community.

We kindly request a meeting as soon as possible to discuss these demands. We look forward to your timely response.

Signed:

Crystal Fincher, Principal, Fincher Consulting
Michael Charles, Partner, CD Strategic
Riall Johnson, Principal, Prism Washington
Christina Blocker, Managing Partner, Archway Consulting Group
Dorian Waller, Managing Partner, Archway Consulting Group
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Mauricio Ayon, Principal, Indelible Media

cc:

Tina Podlodowski, Chair, WA State Democratic Party
State Representative Joe Fitzgibbon, Chair, House Democratic Campaign Committee
State Senator Jaime Pedersen, Chair, Washington Senate Democratic Campaign Committee