

**The Florida Senate**  
**BILL ANALYSIS AND FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT**

(This document is based on the provisions contained in the legislation as of the latest date listed below.)

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Prepared By: The Professional Staff of the Committee on Infrastructure and Security

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BILL: SR 222

INTRODUCER: Senator Simpson and others

SUBJECT: White Nationalism and White Supremacy

DATE: January 9, 2020

REVISED: \_\_\_\_\_

	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR	REFERENCE	ACTION
1.	Proctor	Miller	IS	<b>Pre-meeting</b>
2.			JU	
3.			RC	

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**I. Summary:**

SR 222 rejects white nationalism and white supremacy as hateful, dangerous, and morally corrupt, and affirms that such philosophies are contradictory to the values that define the people of Florida.

Legislative resolutions have no force of law and are not subject to the approval or veto powers of the Governor.

**II. Present Situation:**

White nationalist groups espouse white supremacist or white separatist ideologies.<sup>1</sup> The term “white supremacist extremism” (WSE) describes people or groups who commit criminal acts in the name of white supremacist ideology. At its core, white supremacist ideology purports that the white race ranks above all others. WSE draws on the constitutionally protected activities of a broad swath of racist hate-oriented groups active in the United States ranging from the Ku Klux Klan to racist skinheads. Some of these groups have elaborate organizational structures, dues-paying memberships, and media wings. Additionally, many individuals espouse extremist beliefs without having formal membership in any specific organization.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Southern Poverty Law Center, *White Nationalist*, <https://www.splcenter.org/fighting-hate/extremist-files/ideology/white-nationalist> (last visited October 11, 2019).

<sup>2</sup> Congressional Research Office, *Domestic Terrorism: An Overview*, Report R44921, August 21, 2017, Jerome P. Bjelopera, available at <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/R/R44921> (last visited October 11, 2019).

A large proportion of white supremacists dualistically divide the world between whites and all other peoples who are seen as enemies.<sup>3</sup> Particular animus is directed toward Jews and African Americans.<sup>4</sup>

Scholars indicate that white supremacists believe in racial separation and that society discriminates against them. To them, whites have lost “ground to other groups and ... extreme measures are required to reverse the trend.”<sup>5</sup> All of this has been encapsulated in a slogan known as the “Fourteen Words”: “We must secure the existence of our race and a future for white children.” This was coined by David Lane, a member of a violent terrorist group active in the 1980s. The Fourteen Words have been described as “the most popular white supremacist slogan in the world.”<sup>6</sup>

### III. Effect of Proposed Changes:

The resolution contains “Whereas” clauses stating that:

- Recent acts of domestic terror, including acts of mass violence, have shocked and saddened our nation.
- This murderous violence was perpetrated by individuals who embraced a philosophy of white nationalism and white supremacy.
- This philosophy is contradictory to the values, constitutional protections, and moral fiber of the United States of America and the State of Florida.

SR 222 rejects white nationalism and white supremacy as hateful, dangerous, and morally corrupt, and affirms that such philosophies are contradictory to the values that define the people of Florida.

Legislative resolutions have no force of law and are not subject to the approval or veto powers of the Governor.

### IV. Constitutional Issues:

#### A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:

None.

#### B. Public Records/Open Meetings Issues:

None.

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<sup>3</sup> *Id.*, citing Chip Berlet and Stanislav Vysotsky, “Overview of U.S. White Supremacist Groups,” *Journal of Political and Military Sociology*, vol. 34, no. 1 (June 2006), p. 13.

<sup>4</sup> *Id.*, citing Leonard Zeskind, *Blood and Politics: The History of the White Nationalist Movement from the Margins to the Mainstream* (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2009), p. 40.

<sup>5</sup> *Id.*, citing Rory McVeigh, “Structured Ignorance and Organized Racism in the United States,” *Social Forces*, vol. 82, no. 3 (March 2004), pp. 895-936.

<sup>6</sup> *Id.*, citing Anti-Defamation League, *Guidebook*, p. 16. Lane died in 2007 while serving 190 years in prison for his involvement with a terrorist group named the Order. See “Founder of Terrorist Group Dies in Prison,” *Terre Haute Tribune-Star*, May 29, 2007, <http://tribstar.com/local/x1155692948/Founder-of-terrorist-group-dies-in-prison> (last visited October 11, 2019). Among other writings, Lane also drafted an influential racist ideological tract titled *The 88 Precepts*.

C. Trust Funds Restrictions:

None.

D. State Tax or Fee Increases:

None.

E. Other Constitutional Issues:

None.

**V. Fiscal Impact Statement:**

A. Tax/Fee Issues:

None.

B. Private Sector Impact:

None.

C. Government Sector Impact:

None.

**VI. Technical Deficiencies:**

None.

**VII. Related Issues:**

None.

**VIII. Statutes Affected:**

This Senate resolution does not amend the Florida Statutes. If enacted, it will become an undesignated chapter law codified in the Laws of Florida.

**IX. Additional Information:**

A. Committee Substitute – Statement of Changes:

(Summarizing differences between the Committee Substitute and the prior version of the bill.)

None.

B. Amendments:

None.

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This Senate Bill Analysis does not reflect the intent or official position of the bill's introducer or the Florida Senate.

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