

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.)

Prepared By: The Professional Staff of the Committee on Governmental Oversight and Accountability

BILL: SR 1074

INTRODUCER: Senator Jones

SUBJECT: White Nationalism and White Supremacy

DATE: March 23, 2021

REVISED: _____

	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR	REFERENCE	ACTION
1.	Candelaria	McVaney	GO	Pre-meeting
2.			JU	
3.			RC	

I. Summary:

SR 1074 rejects and condemns white nationalism and white supremacy as hateful expressions of intolerance which contradict the values that define the people of Florida and the United States.

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

II. Present Situation:

A Senate Resolution

A Senate resolution is a one-house document pertaining to issues that are ceremonial in nature in which the House of Representatives has no involvement.¹ Florida Senate Rule 3.6 states that resolutions are required to contain a proper title as required by Article III, Section 6 of the Florida Constitution. A Senate resolution must be read by title only, two times on the same day before the question is put on adoption by voice vote.²

White Supremacy

White supremacy is the belief that the white race is inherently superior to other races and that white people should have control over people of other races.³ The belief supports the defense and maintenance of white power and privilege.

¹ The Florida Senate, *Glossary, Bills: Resolution: Senate Resolution*, available at <http://www.flsenate.gov/Reference/Glossary#B> (last visited January 12, 2021).

² Florida Senate Rule 4.14

³ Merriam-Webster, *White Supremacy Definition*, available at <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/white%20supremacy> (last visited, February 22, 2021)

The United States Department of Homeland Security (DHS) defines white supremacist extremists (WSE) as individuals who seek, wholly or in part, through unlawful acts of force or violence, to support their belief in the intellectual and moral superiority of the white race over other races.⁴ WSE violence often targets racial, ethnic, and religious minorities, as well as government and law enforcement officials.⁵ Attacks are normally against targets of opportunity rather than pre-meditated plots.

White Nationalism

White nationalism is the belief that national identity should be built around white ethnicity and that white people should therefore maintain both a demographic majority and dominance of the nation's culture and public life.⁶ White nationalism often overlaps with white supremacy, and the two are regularly used interchangeably.

Hate Crime Statistics in the United States (2019)

The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) program collects data about single-bias and multiple-bias hate crimes. The program provides a yearly report on hate crimes reported in the United States.

Victims of Hate Crime

The UCR program reported the 2019 data in regard to bias-motivated crimes throughout the United States. The data was submitted by 15,558 law enforcement agencies, providing information on the offense, victims, offenders, and locations of the crime. The FBI reported 7,314 hate crimes involving a total of 8,763 victims.⁷ The following is a breakdown of the crimes by motivation behind targeting a victim(s):

- Race/Ethnicity/Ancestry: 57.6 percent;
- Religion: 20.1 percent;
- Sexual Orientation: 16.7 percent;
- Gender Identity/Gender: 3.6 percent; and
- Disability: 2.0 percent.

Of the total hate crimes committed, 111 were committed in Florida.⁸

Offenses by Crime Category

Of the crimes categorized as hate crimes against persons, 40 percent were for intimidation, 36.7 percent were for simple assault, and 21 percent were for aggravated assault. The crimes included 51 murders, 30 rapes, and three offenses of human trafficking.⁹

⁴ US Department of Homeland Security, *US Violent White Supremacy Groups*. Available at <https://www.dhs.gov/publication/reference-aid-us-violent-white-supremacist-extremists> (last visited February 21, 2021)

⁵ *Id.*

⁶ Eric Kaufmann, *Rethinking Ethnicity: Majority Groups and Dominant Minorities*, Jan. 2004 (last visited February 22, 2021)

⁷ Federal Bureau of Investigation, *Hate Crime Statistics 2019*, available at <https://ucr.fbi.gov/hate-crime/2019> (last visited, February 19, 2021)

⁸ *Id.*

⁹ *Id.*

There were 2,811 hate crime offenses classified as crimes against property. The majority, 76.6 percent of these, were acts of destruction, damage, or vandalism. Robbery, larceny-theft, and motor vehicle theft accounted for the other 23.4 percent.¹⁰

Basic Rights under Article I, Section 2

Under Article 1, Section 2 of the Florida Constitution, each individual person has a right to equal protection of the laws. This constitutional provision states:

All natural persons, female and male alike, are equal before the law and have inalienable rights, among which are the right to enjoy and defend life and liberty, to pursue happiness, to be rewarded for industry, and to acquire, possess and protect property. No person shall be deprived of any right because of race, religion, national origin, or physical disability.

III. Effect of Proposed Changes:

The bill provides clauses relating to white supremacy, white nationalism, and the values that define the people of Florida and the United States, signifying that:

- Recent acts of domestic terror, including acts of mass violence, have shocked and saddened our nation;
- In a 2006 assessment, the FBI found that white supremacists believe that the white race is superior to all other races, that nonwhites are subhuman, and that the white race was created to rule over other races;
- In that assessment the FBI stated, “To be a white nationalist is to be pro-white. The domestic white nationalist movement seeks to promote, honor, and defend the white race.... White nationalists view multiculturalism, diversity, and illegal immigration as direct assaults on the white race and race-mixing as akin to white genocide. They hope to appeal to mainstream whites, believing that the majority of white people do not understand the imminent or long-term threat to their race”;
- In 2019, the FBI reported 7,314 hate crimes in the United States, an increase from 2018, including 111 hate crimes in Florida alone;
- White supremacy and white nationalism are contrary to the ideals of the State of Florida as expressed in the State Constitution, which declares that “all natural persons, female and male alike, are equal before the law and have inalienable rights, among which are the right to enjoy and defend life and liberty, to pursue happiness, to be rewarded for industry, and to acquire, possess and protect property. No person shall be deprived of any right because of race, religion, national origin, or physical disability”;
- Abraham Lincoln, in an 1858 speech, said of the founders of our nation, “Wise statesmen as they were, they knew the tendency of prosperity to breed tyrants, and so they established these great self-evident truths, that when in the distant future some man, some faction, some interest, should set up the doctrine that none but rich men, or none but white men, were entitled to life, liberty and pursuit of happiness, their posterity might look up again to the Declaration of Independence and take courage to renew the battle which their fathers

¹⁰ *Id.*

began—so that truth, and justice, and mercy, and all the humane and Christian virtues might not be extinguished from the land; so that no man would hereafter dare to limit and circumscribe the great principles on which the temple of liberty was being built”;

- Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., while recognizing that “no other nation can mean to us what our nation means,” condemned “nationalism perverted into chauvinism and isolationism” as “preached by ... the advocates of white supremacy” and asked, “Will we continue to serve the false god of racial prejudice or will we serve the God who made of one blood all men to dwell upon the face of the earth?”; and
- President Ronald Reagan observed in a 1988 speech, “Anyone, from any corner of the Earth, can come to live in America and become an American.... This, I believe, is one of the most important sources of America’s greatness. We lead the world because, unique among nations, we draw our people—our strength—from every country and every corner of the world. And by doing so we continuously renew and enrich our nation. While other countries cling to the stale past, here in America we breathe life into dreams. We create the future, and the world follows us into tomorrow. Thanks to each wave of new arrivals to this land of opportunity, we’re a nation forever young, forever bursting with energy and new ideas, and always on the cutting edge, always leading the world to the next frontier. This quality is vital to our future as a nation. If we ever closed the door to new Americans, our leadership in the world would soon be lost.”

The bill rejects and condemns white nationalism and white supremacy as hateful expressions of intolerance which contradict the values that define the people of Florida and the United States.

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

IV. Constitutional Issues:

A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:

The mandate restrictions do not apply because the bill does not require counties and municipalities to spend funds, reduce counties’ or municipalities’ ability to raise revenue, or reduce the percentage of state tax shared with counties and municipalities.

B. Public Records/Open Meetings Issues:

None.

C. Trust Funds Restrictions:

None.

D. State Tax or Fee Increases:

None.

E. Other Constitutional Issues:

None identified.

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:

None.

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.