

RESOLUTION NO. 2009-31

**A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BELLINGHAM,  
WASHINGTON TAKING A POSITION OF SUPPORT FOR REFERENDUM 71 PROVIDING  
FULL AND EQUAL RIGHTS TO THOSE IN DOMESTIC PARTNERSHIPS**

**WHEREAS**, this year the Legislature passed and the Governor signed into law Engrossed Second Substitute Senate Bill 5688 which expands the rights, responsibilities, and obligations of state-registered same-sex and senior domestic partners; and

**WHEREAS**, opponents of Engrossed Second Substitute Senate Bill 5688 filed Referendum 71 to send this bill to a vote of the citizens of Washington; and

**WHEREAS**, the Washington Secretary of State has certified Referendum 71 for the November 3, 2009 ballot; and

**WHEREAS**, a vote of "approved" on Referendum 71 will allow Engrossed Second Substitute Senate Bill 5688 to become law and provide that state registered domestic partners be treated the same as spouses under state law; and

**WHEREAS**, voter rejection of Referendum 71 would lead to a failure to protect these basic rights and obligations; and

**WHEREAS**, voter rejection of Referendum 71 would eliminate the ability of domestic partners to take leave from work to care for critically ill partners, prevent partners of state employees from getting their pension benefits, and eliminate the rights of a person in a committed domestic partnership to visit a sick or injured partner in the hospital; and

**WHEREAS**, passage of Referendum 71 would enable expansion of access to state retirement benefits and create survivor benefits for domestic partners of City of Bellingham employees enrolled in certain retirement programs, and failure of the referendum would prohibit receipt of state retirement benefits by surviving partners of City of Bellingham employees who were enrolled in certain retirement programs; and

**WHEREAS**, the city of Bellingham embraces legal equality and fair treatment for all residents, and values the contributions and personal dignity of all; and

**WHEREAS**, the City Council has carefully considered the direct and indirect impacts of Referendum 71 and concludes that its rejection and the resulting repeal of Engrossed Second Substitute Senate Bill 5688 will erode equal rights for citizens of the State of Washington.

City of Bellingham  
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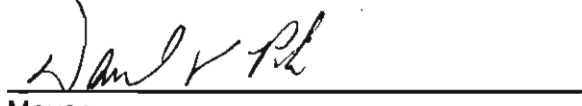
**NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BELLINGHAM:**

The City of Bellingham urges Bellingham voters to vote "approved" on Referendum 71 on the November 2009 ballot, thereby retaining Engrossed Second Substitute Senate Bill 5688 and expanding the rights and responsibilities of state registered domestic partners as equal to those of spouses.

**PASSED** by the Council this 12th day of October, 2009.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Council President

**APPROVED** by me this 20th day of October, 2009.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor

**ATTEST**   
\_\_\_\_\_  
Finance Director

**APPROVED AS TO FORM:**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Office of the City Attorney

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