

PROCLAMATION BY THE KENT COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

WHEREAS, the Kent County Board of Commissioners is committed to ensuring equal access to County services to all residents of Kent County, Michigan and providing equal employment opportunities; and

WHEREAS, Kent County's Harassment and Discrimination Prevention Policy set forth that "In order to create and maintain an environment in which all employees and members of the public are treated with courtesy and respect, the County will not tolerate any harassing and/or discriminatory behavior based on status or class protected by law such as race, color, religion, ethnicity, national origin, gender, age, height, weight, marital status, veteran's status, or disability." Additionally, Kent County's Equal Opportunity Employer Policy states, "The County will not tolerate discrimination against any applicant or employee because of race, color, religion, ethnicity, national origin, gender, age, U.S. military veteran status, disability, or any other personal characteristics covered by applicable law."; and

WHEREAS, Kent County interprets these policies to include a complete prohibition on discrimination based on hair texture or hairstyles predicated on the association of any particular hairstyle with race, and a complete prohibition on discrimination in implementing mandatory health and safety practices, regulations and requirements that involve hair and hairstyle

WHEREAS, historically, people of color have been subjected to and continue to be subjected to discrimination based on hair texture and hairstyles; and

WHEREAS, to continue best practices for hiring and retaining employees, Kent County will update current training surrounding its Harassment and Discrimination Prevention and Equal Opportunity Employer Policies to educate County management and employees that discrimination based on hair texture and hairstyles associated with race is prohibited under these policies ; and,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that Board Chair Mandy Bolter and I, Commissioner Robert S. Womack, on behalf of the Kent County Board of Commissioners, do hereby declare that the term "race" as used in the Kent County's Harassment and Discrimination Prevention and Equal Opportunity Employer Policies shall be understood as being inclusive of traits historically associated with race, including, but not limited to, hair texture and hairstyles.

Mandy Bolter, Chair
Kent County

Robert S. Womack
Kent County Commissioner