

Elect Respect

Moved by Councillor Damerla

Seconded by Councillor Sue McFadden

WHEREAS democracy is healthy when everyone is able to participate fully and safely and contribute to the well-being of their community;

AND WHEREAS we are witnessing the dissolution of democratic discourse and respectful debate across all levels of government and in neighbouring jurisdictions;

AND WHEREAS Ontario's municipally elected officials are dealing with increasingly hostile, unsafe work environments facing threats and harassment;

AND WHEREAS social media platforms have exacerbated disrespectful dialogue, negative commentary, and toxic engagement which disincentivizes individuals, especially women and candidates from diverse backgrounds from running for office;

AND WHEREAS better decisions are made when democracy is respectful and constructive and the voices of diverse genders, identities, ethnicities, races, sexual orientation, ages and abilities are heard and represented around municipal council tables;

AND WHEREAS the Association of Municipalities of Ontario's Healthy Democracy Project has identified concerning trends with fewer people voting in local elections and running for municipal office;

AND WHEREAS in 2024, female elected representatives from across Halton formed a group called H.E.R. (Halton Elected Representatives) which pledged to speak out against harassment and negativity in politics and call on elected officials to uphold the highest standards of conduct;

AND WHEREAS H.E.R. Halton has launched a campaign called *Elect Respect* to promote the importance of healthy democracy and safe, inclusive, respectful work environments for all elected officials that encourages individuals to participate in the political process;

AND WHEREAS on June 5, 2025, the Canadian Association of Feminist Parliamentarians launched a non-partisan "Parliamentary Civility Pledge" to encourage all parliamentarians to commit to end workplace harassment and increase civility on Parliament Hill, modelled after the pledge developed in Halton by representatives of H.E.R.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

THAT City of Mississauga Council supports the *Elect Respect* pledge and commits to:

- Treat others with respect in all spaces—public, private, and online,
- Reject and call out harassment, abuse, and personal attacks,
- Focus debate on ideas and policies, not personal attacks,
- Help build a supportive culture where people of all backgrounds feel safe to run for and hold office,
- Call on relevant authorities to ensure the protection of elected officials who face abuse or threats, and
- Model integrity and respect by holding one another to the highest standards of conduct.

AND THAT City of Mississauga Council calls on elected officials, organizations and community members to support the *Elect Respect* campaign and sign the online pledge at www.electrespect.ca.

AND THAT a copy of this resolution be sent to the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, Ontario's Big City Mayors, the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, the Office of the Mayor of Burlington, relevant MPs and MPPs, Regional Police, the Ontario Provincial Police and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.



Date: October 16, 2025
Councillor Dipika Damerla
Ward 7