WHEREAS, racism is a social system with multiple dimensions -- individual racism that is internalized or interpersonal and systemic racism that is institutional or structural, and is a system of structuring opportunity and assigning value based on the social interpretation of how one looks; and

WHEREAS, race is a social construct with no biological basis; and

WHEREAS, racism unfairly disadvantages specific individuals and communities, while unfairly giving advantages to other individuals and communities and saps the strength of the whole society through the waste of human resources; and

WHEREAS, systemic racism is a root cause of poverty and constricts economic mobility, negatively impacting health care, criminal justice, education, housing, employment, food and nutrition and many more issues that determine health outcomes; and

WHEREAS, at this critical inflection point in American history, African Americans are confronting two crises -- the coronavirus pandemic and police violence -- that are disproportionately impacting their community and bringing racial injustice to the forefront with peaceful demonstrations not only in Erie County, but also in cities and small towns in every state and around the globe; and

WHEREAS, the American Academy of Pediatrics, American Medical Association and American College of Physicians have all stated that racism is a public health issue and condemned police violence; and

WHEREAS, Black babies die at more than twice the rate of white babies in Ohio with Erie County worse than the state average; and

WHEREAS, Black women account for 17 percent of Ohioans giving birth, but represent 34 percent of pregnancy-related deaths in the Buckeye State; and

WHEREAS, Black Ohioans have an average life expectancy that is several years less than white Ohioans; and

WHEREAS, Democratic leaders across the state have repeatedly called attention to these inequities and demanded action; and
WHEREAS, Congresswoman Joyce Beatty has offered a resolution recognizing racism as a national crisis and the need for a truth and reconciliation process; and

WHEREAS, the Ohio Legislative Black Caucus, led by President Stephanie Howse, has introduced legislation that would declare racism a public health crisis; and

WHEREAS, the Ohio Democratic Party and local county parties, Lorain City Council, Lorain County Commissioners, Franklin County Commissioners, Cleveland City Council, Columbus City Council, Hamilton County Commissioners, Akron City Council, Summit County Council, Toledo City Council and Lucas County Commissioners have passed or will consider resolutions to declare racism a public health crisis in their communities; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Erie County Democratic Party Executive Committee recognizes that structural and systemic racism is embedded and entrenched in every aspect of our nation, declares unequivocally that racism is a public health crisis and calls on Governor Mike DeWine and Ohio’s legislative leaders – in particular State Senator Theresa Gavarone and State House Representative D J Swearingen who represent Erie County - to join in our declaration and enact equity in all state policies; and

FINALLY BE IT RESOLVED that this Resolution be disseminated to Ohio Legislative Black Caucus President Stephanie Howse, Governor Mike DeWine and Ohio’s legislative majority and minority leaders, State Senator Theresa Gavarone and State House Representative D J Swearingen.

Approved on June 25, 2020

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Amy F. Grubbe, Chairman      Timothy J. Dunlap, Secretary