SENATE RESOLUTION

8629

By Senators Liias, King, and Short

WHEREAS, Director Berntsen served as the director of the Department of Licensing from July 1, 2018, until her retirement on February 2, 2023; and

WHEREAS, As the director of the Department of Licensing, Director Berntsen was the person behind many of the department's outreach and diversity initiatives, particularly focusing on underserved and underrepresented communities; and

WHEREAS, Director Berntsen established the first Department of Licensing Office of Equity and Inclusion and mandatory cultural competency training for Department of Licensing employees in order to make the department more welcoming and accepting of all; and

WHEREAS, Director Berntsen advocated to allow Washington residents to use 'X' on their driver's license to accurately reflect their gender identity and support Washington's nonbinary and gender diverse population; and

WHEREAS, Director Berntsen has worked tirelessly to conduct outreach in Washington for REAL ID travel laws, regardless of Washingtonians' citizenship status, so that all people in Washington are prepared with correct identification when traveling; and

WHEREAS, Director Berntsen led her agency through the uncertainty of the COVID-19 pandemic; and

WHEREAS, Director Berntsen received the Building Bridges Across the Nation Award from the Washington State India Trade Relations Action Committee for her unparalleled work building relationships with communities across the state; and

WHEREAS, Before her tenure at the Department of Licensing, Director Berntsen also served as director of the Office of Minority and Women's Business Enterprises from 2016-2018; and

WHEREAS, Under Director Berntsen's leadership, the Office of Minority and Women's Business Enterprises maintained a 97% customer satisfaction rate, decreased their processing times, and increased the number of certified businesses within the OMWBE directory; and

WHEREAS, Director Berntsen also served as deputy director of the Department of Licensing for more than four years before being appointed to the Office of Minority and Women's Business Enterprises and made significant contributions to updating the agency's technology; and

WHEREAS, Prior to holding these roles, Director Berntsen worked as a statewide transportation policy advisor to the Governor's Office and a research analyst for the House of Representatives; and

WHEREAS, Throughout all of her roles serving the people of Washington State, Director Berntsen has placed an emphasis on the importance of diversity and inclusion; and

WHEREAS, Director Berntsen has served the state of Washington in many capacities over the years with determination and success;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Washington State Senate recognize retired Director of the Department of Licensing Teresa Berntsen for her service to Washington State over many years; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That copies of this resolution be immediately transmitted by the Secretary of the Senate to Director Teresa Berntsen and the Department of Licensing in celebration of her retirement.

I, Sarah Bannister, Secretary of the Senate,

do hereby certify that this is a true and

correct copy of Senate Resolution 8629,

adopted by the Senate

March 22, 2023

SARAH BANNISTER

Secretary of the Senate