Resolution in Support of City of Bellingham Initiative No. 2021-02.

**WHEREAS**, police surveillance and actions based on predicted crimes may threaten the privacy of all of us, and they have historically been used to intimidate and oppress certain communities and groups more than others, including those that are defined by a common race, ethnicity, religion, national origin, income level, sexual orientation, or political perspective.

**WHEREAS**, in recent years, some Police Departments across the United States have adopted advanced policing technologies, including facial recognition and predictive policing technologies.

**WHEREAS**, whenever possible, decisions relating to advanced policing technology should occur with strong consideration given to the impact that such technologies may have on civil rights and civil liberties.

**WHEREAS**, many facial recognition and predictive policing technologies used by municipal police departments rely on proprietary algorithms, which cannot be subjected to full public scrutiny.

**WHEREAS**, a 2020 study by the US National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) of two- hundred facial recognition algorithms concluded that they have high rates of false positive identifications for Black people.

**WHEREAS**, the voters of Bellingham recognize the emerging need to protect the public safety, privacy, and civil rights of their residents, a growing number of local governments have adopted laws that prohibit the use of facial recognition and other biometric surveillance technology. More than half a dozen U.S. cities have passed bans on the government use of facial recognition.

**WHEREAS**, police departments employing predictive police technology elsewhere in the United States have not demonstrated a commitment to transparency and public accountability.

**WHEREAS**, the application of predictive policing technology may violate the constitutional requirement that police possess reasonable suspicion before stopping individuals.

**WHEREAS**, Bellingham voters find that advanced policing technologies currently lack the protections needed to adequately safeguard the rights and liberties of all people.

**WHEREAS**, the propensity for facial recognition technology and predictive policing technology to endanger civil rights and civil liberties substantially outweighs its purported benefits, and the technology will exacerbate racial injustice and threaten our ability to live free of continuous government monitoring.

**WHEREAS,** City of Bellingham Initiative No. 2021-02 would:

* prohibit the City from acquiring or using facial recognition technology,
* prohibit the City from contracting with a third party to use facial recognition technology on its behalf,
* prohibit the use of predictive policing technology,
* prohibit the retention of unlawfully acquired data,
* prohibit the use of data, information, or evidence derived from the use of facial recognition technology or predictive policing technology in any legal proceeding, and
* authorize private civil enforcement actions.

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the Whatcom County Democrats support placing City of Bellingham Initiative No. 2021-02 on the ballot;

**THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT** upon adoption of this resolution, Whatcom Democrats will publicize this proposed initiative;

**THEREFORE, BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED THAT** the Whatcom County Democrats will use its mailing list and online presence to mobilize voters and collect signatures.