

SENATE RESOLUTION

8629

By Senators Liias, King, and Short

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

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

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

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

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

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

22 WHEREAS, Director Berntsen received the Building Bridges Across
23 the Nation Award from the Washington State India Trade Relations

1 Action Committee for her unparalleled work building
2 relationships with communities across the state; and

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

34 I, Sarah Bannister, Secretary of the Senate,
35 do hereby certify that this is a true and
36 correct copy of Senate Resolution 8629,
37 adopted by the Senate

1 March 22, 2023

2 SARAH BANNISTER

3 Secretary of the Senate