

Initiative 101 – Safety through Peace

On the November 2003 Election ballot

The ballot title for the Initiated Ordinance shall be as follows:

“Shall the voters for the City and County of Denver adopt an Initiated Ordinance to require the city to help ensure public safety by increasing peacefulness—that is, by defusing political, religious and ethnic tensions, both locally and globally—through the identification and implementation of any systematic, stress-reducing techniques or programs, whether mental, physical, etc, that are (1) scientifically shown to reduce society-wide stress, as measured by reduced crime, accidents, warfare and terrorism, and also (2) shown to be of net financial benefit for the city?” Yes ___ No ___

Be it enacted by the People of the City and County of Denver

The Code of the City and County of Denver is amended by the addition of a new article to read:

ARTICLE ___. INCREASING PUBLIC SAFETY BY CREATING PEACE

Sec. ____. **Definitions.** As used in this division.

- (1) *Effective* means that at least three (3) peer-reviewed studies, published in scientific or other academic journals, have demonstrated that use of the technology is consistently accompanied by a significant reduction in crime, accidents, warfare and terrorism, both locally and globally.
- (2) *Net financial benefit* means that a cost/benefit analysis based on peer-reviewed and academically published studies makes it reasonable to expect that compliance with this ordinance will result in a net financial gain for the city, after the costs of compliance, by reducing costs of public safety and enhancing economic viability.
- (3) *Peace* means not only freedom from war, violence and terrorism, but also a state of harmony and cooperation among individuals and groups—especially among political, economic, religious and ethnic groups that have historically experienced animosity—a state of peaceful comity that allows rapid progress for individuals and the society as a whole.
- (4) *Peer-reviewed studies* means studies that are published in or accepted for publication by scientific or other academic journals that meet nationally recognized requirements for research manuscripts and that submit such research manuscripts for review by independent experts (*peer reviewers*) who are not part of the editorial staff.
- (5) *Stress-reducing technologies* means any systematic program, practice or technique, whether mental, physical, etc., that has been shown in peer-reviewed

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and academically published studies to (1) reduce negative effects of individual stress, such as anxiety and ill-health, and (2) reduce negative effects of society-wide stress, such as crime, accidents, warfare and terrorism.

- (6) *Terrorism* means activities that--
 - (A) involve violent or other acts dangerous to human life that are a violation of the criminal laws of any sovereign nation, or of any U.S. state or municipality;
 - (B) appear to be intended-
 - (i) to intimidate or coerce a civilian population; *or*
 - (ii) to influence the policy of a government by intimidation or coercion; or
 - (iii) to affect the conduct of a government or its people by mass destruction, assassination, kidnapping.

Sec. __. Declaration of findings and intent.

The People of the City and County of Denver hereby declare that terrorism presents the most potentially catastrophic threat to public safety and that this threat has its roots in an epidemic of social stress. We recognize that, whether through biological, chemical or nuclear weapons, even a handful of terrorists can cause mass destruction in any city, including Denver. We further recognize that defense through conventional means—through the police, military, espionage or peace treaties—is insufficient to stop such terrorist disasters. For this reason, City and County of Denver should identify and implement any new peace-creating programs, specifically programs that reduce social stress as measured by scientific evidence showing that they significantly reduce crime, warfare and terrorism, especially such programs that also provide a net financial benefit to the city as a “peace dividend”.

Failure of conventional approaches to peace: The United States has the mightiest military in the world, for example, but the U.S. government has repeatedly said that further terrorist attacks are “inevitable.” The U.S. government also has the most extensive espionage systems in world history, but no one familiar with espionage prior to 9/11—or throughout history—can feel confident that spies can save America from terrorism. Negotiations and peace treaties are unreliable too because in a war on terrorism—where scattered individuals and groups think and act on their own—there is no one to negotiate with.

Therefore, to maximize public safety it is incumbent upon every government to actively seek and aggressively implement new and proven approaches to create peace and defuse terrorism. However, in an age of science, responsible governments should only adopt new programs if they have been thoroughly documented through objective evidence. Especially

when dealing with new and innovative programs, programs that may clash with preconceptions or prejudices, it is important to rely on the best evidence—to rely, that is, on studies that have been carefully scrutinized by independent experts, then accepted and published in scientific or other academic journals. Studies that have survived this *peer review* process give confidence that the research is of professional quality.

Social violence caused by social stress: According to one promising theory, warfare and other social violence are caused by social stress. If the stresses in the social atmosphere mount too high—if political, economic, religious and ethnic tensions reach the breaking point—then they erupt as crime, warfare and terrorism. To reduce social violence, therefore—to reduce crime, warfare and terrorism, social stress and tension must be reduced.

One example of a peace-creating program: Many approaches exist for reducing stress in individuals, families and communities through proper behavior, wholesome food and herbal medicines, natural healthcare and exercise, holistic education and specific types of meditation and music, etc. At least one program for dissolving social stress on a national and global scale, as well, has already been scientifically validated. This consciousness-based approach has worked every time—as measured by reduced crime, accidents, fires, substance abuse, warfare and terrorism, and yet in a completely peaceful way.

Medical science has already accepted that meditation by any one individual will dissolve stress in that individual. The result is reduced anxiety, heart disease and other stress-related disorders. The new research—50 demonstrations written up in 23 scientific studies published in peer-reviewed academic journals—shows that meditation *by large groups* dissolves stress *in society as a whole*, and even around the world. The result: reduced crime, war and terrorism.

The mechanism explaining this effect is not yet clear, but the effect itself has been surprisingly powerful. Repeated studies have shown that violence begins to decrease throughout the United States, for example, when attendance at an assembly of experts in the much-researched Transcendental Meditation technique reaches about 1,700. Similar changes begin to appear in the world as a whole with groups of about 8,000 participants.

In one of the most striking studies, research on seven different Transcendental Meditation assemblies showed that war deaths in the Middle East declined by an average of 71%. The statistical chance of coincidence was less than one in a million. In another study of the three largest meditation assemblies ever

held in the West, worldwide terrorism declined by 72%. In addition, the research shows not only a *decrease* of violence, but also an *increase* in economic vitality. As social stress declines, and harmony and cooperation increase, repeated evidence shows that economic growth improves, stock markets go up, and inflation and unemployment decline.

“Peace dividend” and economic vitality. Finally, cost-benefit analyses indicate that such a peace-creation program could produce a marked “peace dividend.” Based on the published evidence, costs for securing public safety in traditional ways are projected to decline and, due to improved economic vitality, tax revenues are projected to increase—producing a net financial gain annually and relieving concerns about the costs of implementing technologies to reduce social stress.

The United States government admits that it can no longer protect its own citizens. In such a crisis, no governmental authority or peace-loving citizens can afford to ignore any peace-creating program that has been thoroughly validated scientifically.

Therefore, the People of the City and County of Denver hereby require, through this proposed ordinance, that the city diligently seek out all programs that alleviate social stress, as measured by reduced crime, warfare and terrorism, and that promise a net financial benefit to the city, as shown by evidence-based cost/benefit analysis, and implement those programs with all deliberate speed. By actively and deliberately creating peace—both locally and globally—such a program will be consistent with, and help fulfill, the city’s primary duty to help ensure public safety, with a thoroughness not otherwise possible.

[Certain information in this declaration of findings stems from scientific and historical facts included in the following: *Permanent Peace: How To Stop Terrorism and War*, a book by Robert M. Oates, published by the Institute of Science, Technology and Public Policy; the “Proposal to Prevent Terrorism,” prepared by the Institute’s director, Dr. John Hagelin; Students Creating Peace Network and End School Violence Now.]

Sec. ____ . Increasing Public Safety by Creating Peace

The City and County of Denver shall help ensure public safety by increasing peacefulness—that is, by defusing political, religious and ethnic tensions, both locally and globally—through the identification and implementation of any systematic, stress-reducing technologies that are (1) scientifically shown to reduce society-wide stress, as measured by reduced crime, accidents, warfare and terrorism, and also (2) shown to be of net financial benefit for the city.

Sec. ____. **Implementation and Enforcement.**

By the effective date, as set forth below, the City and County of Denver shall adopt all measures necessary for the proper and effective implementation and enforcement of the provisions of this article.

Sec. ____. **Effective date.**

This article shall be effective one hundred and eighty (180) days from and after the date of its enactment.

Sec. ____. **Severability.**

Should any one (1) or more provisions of this article be determined to be illegal or unenforceable, all other provisions nevertheless shall remain effective.