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The following is the text of the speech Secretary Richardson gave on August 7, 2017:
https://youtu.be/GD_ExcLg29c

The Business of Diversity

"It's great to be with you today, and I want to greet you in many ways: "Xin bao," "Buenas diaz," "Geweï pengyou, dajia hao," and "Good morning."

This is an opportunity for us to gather together and realize just how Oregon's rich linguistic and geographic and population diversities can all come together. We can appreciate one another regardless of where we are from, and I believe that this cultural diversity that we have is one of Oregon's greatest resources. It offers and serves as a great cauldron for mixing and forging diverse ideas, perspectives, religions, cultures, and diversity in all of its forms. Such diversity is good for business and it's good for the future of our state.

Today, we have an incredible panel that we will all learn from. They come from a variety of backgrounds--a true mix of diversity, of success, of experience--and they are representative of the diversified populations we have in Oregon.

We also have a deeply diverse audience. Just look around you. Look at those seated with you at your table. Are there people there that you don't know? I've been to China, a number of times and in the Chinese language, they have a cultural idea there; it's called guanxi, and guanxi is translated loosely as "relationships before business." Part of what we are trying to accomplish today is to bring people together, so that you can start some additional relationships, get to know each other and network.

On a local level, I would like to introduce you to Lee Fleming. Lee, stand up. Let me tell you a little bit about Lee. Here's what Lee has said that has meant so much to me. By the way, Lee is Multnomah County's Supply Diversity Officer. He said, "Driving toward achieving equity in our business practices is exciting and it's my role. I get to challenge business as usual. I get to serve those who are underserved. We need to determine how to engage small and underutilized firms and how do we better engage them? We need to have an ability to serve the community directly and excitingly." He says, "I love my job."

The future is bright for Oregon's young people. We have with us some individuals who are service-oriented, who have an entrepreneurial spirit, who embrace diversity and who understand the importance of science, technology, engineering and mathematics, the STEM subjects. We have three young women from Westview High School. Would you please stand? I'd like to introduce you, Nandhana Nixon, Namitha Nixon, and Ragini Dindukurti -- three young

women—and they travel and bring attention to our veterans who are amputees, and these girls are coming up with ways to help these vets to cope better in life. It's such a wonderful thing to see them. They are here with Xavier Nixon and they travel around to other high schools. They also promote STEM learning among women students across our state. Thank you, girls, for all that you do.

In short, diversity is good for business and it's good for Oregon from the state behemoth of Multnomah County to STEM for girls in high schools.

Those of us in government also have a special role to play in the business of diversity. The Oregon dream is for us to be a people with one heart in our compassion for one another, with one mind in our willingness to solve the problems that face our society, and with one commitment to our service to our most vulnerable citizens.

Oregon cannot reach its potential unless each of us reach our potential. I feel that's part of the Oregon dream and so I'm hopeful that as we accept one another, and that goes for all of us.

On a personal note, as Oregon' Secretary of State, I'm responsible for all of the state, and I'm trying to work on opening opportunities for all populations, for all who historically have been underserved, for those that sometimes don't get invited to the table. And yet, as an old white guy with white hair, from Central Point, what do I know about diversity? I'm hoping that there will be grace given to me as I try to learn more. If you knew my background, my parents were old when I ... older when I was born and my father, if you've ever watched *All in the Family*, was Archie Bunker and my mom was Edith. I grew up watching that dynamic and it was an interesting home to grow up in. These were hard-working, great people, salt of the earth, but diversity was not part of their lifestyle or their concerns.

Now, we can change that. For me, the Oregon dream is that we might be more like a family. As Walter quoted Martin as saying, "brothers and sisters". My wife and I, we've got nine kids. I have eight daughters and one son, and they cross the spectrum in our family. My young ones are very progressive and they say, "Dad, nobody thinks that way anymore." The older ones have different opinions. All of them have their own personalities, but they're family, and I believe Oregon should be like family, where we don't just criticize each other and blame for the past, but we focus on where we can work together for a better future for our state. I believe that can happen.

We are a family. We're a diverse family. We have every hue of sexual preferences. We're multi-generations. We have every religion. We have every zip code. We have diverse backgrounds, but we also have so much in common. We want this to be the best state it can be, and when we look back at our history, we haven't always lived up to our potential. And yet, for me, I believe that by working together, we have unity, which is the glue of our democracy, the glue of our republic. It is the spirit that made our state so great and so attractive to the pioneers who settled here. They gave us so much that has benefited us in our own lives. We drink from wells we didn't dig and it's for us to leave our state a better place for those who follow.

I harken back to the principles that made our country great. Our Declaration of Independence, I think, spells it out in such a beautiful way, where it says that we hold these truths to be self-evident that all are created equal, that we're endowed by our creator with certain unalienable rights, the right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. That was given at a time when

equality was not a strong point for America, but it wasn't intended to describe that current situation. It was a goal of what we could become over time. So, many years have passed away and much progress has been made, but there is so much more that we can do.

Now, I'm excited about the conversation we're going to have here today. We have a great panel. We have a great opportunity to network and today is not the end of the conversation. Hopefully, this will be an annual event and it's just the beginning of the conversation, because as Secretary of State, I want to serve all of Oregon. Rural Oregon has its challenges. North Portland has its challenges. The coast has its challenges. Every region does, and we have a government that is supposed to serve the people—a government of the people, by the people and for the people, and if there's anything that I can do in the next four to eight years to promote that service, then, this will be time well spent.

As your Secretary of State, I'm committed to upholding the principles that are in the Pledge of Allegiance—a reminder that we give whenever we say the pledge—when we place our hand over our heart and we say, “with liberty and justice for all.” Today, I hope that we expand that to, “with liberty and justice and opportunity for all.”

Let's stand together for diversity in business. Let's stand together for diversity in our relationships. Let's stand together for a bright, unified future for the State of Oregon."