

30 "inherent and inalienable" constitutional rights is the fundamental right "to communicate
31 freely about our thoughts and opinions";

32 WHEREAS, we may also be "responsible for the abuse of that right";

33 WHEREAS, there should be a renewal of respectful discourse and behavior in civic
34 and public settings in Utah;

35 WHEREAS, this is not an appeal for all citizens of the state simply to get along;

36 WHEREAS, there are profound differences among Utahns, and spirited debate is a
37 vital part of American democracy;

38 WHEREAS, participation in American civic and public life does not require that we
39 sacrifice our deepest convictions but that we best protect our own rights by protecting the
40 rights of others and adhering to high ethical standards;

41 WHEREAS, the following ground rules of civic and public engagement recognize the
42 important place of the rights, responsibilities, and respect inherent in our civic and
43 constitutional compact;

44 WHEREAS, it is vital that the importance of rights and the dignity of each individual
45 be remembered;

46 WHEREAS, our society is founded upon the proposition that all people are born free
47 and equal in dignity and rights, and that freedom of conscience and expression is at the
48 foundation of our rights;

49 WHEREAS, each of us should be responsible both in the exercise of our rights and in
50 protecting the rights of others;

51 WHEREAS, especially on matters of personal faith, claims of conscience, and human
52 rights, public policy should seek solutions that are fair to all;

53 WHEREAS, all people, especially our leaders and the media, should demonstrate a
54 commitment to be respectful in discourse and behavior, particularly in civic and public
55 forums;

56 WHEREAS, respect should also be shown by being honest and as inclusive as
57 possible, by mindfully listening to and attempting to understand the concerns of others, by

58 valuing their opinions even when there is disagreement, and by addressing their concerns
59 when possible;

60 WHEREAS, public discourse can be passionate while maintaining mutual respect that
61 reaches beyond differing opinions;

62 WHEREAS, intimidation, ridicule, personal attacks, mean spiritedness, reprisals
63 against those who disagree, and other disrespectful or unethical behaviors destroy the fabric of
64 society and should not be tolerated;

65 WHEREAS, those who engage in this behavior should be brought to light, held
66 accountable, and should no longer enjoy the public's trust;

67 WHEREAS, the social compact "of the people" and "by the people" is "for the people,"
68 and each person has a responsibility to build community; and

69 WHEREAS, on divisive issues, areas of common ground should first be explored, and
70 effort should be given to build broad-based agreement, giving due regard to the concerns of
71 minority points of view:

72 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of the state of Utah, the
73 Governor concurring therein, being concerned about growing incivility in our civic and public
74 settings, urge the people of Utah to return to fundamental principles that will lead to greater
75 civility and a new spirit of community and invite all Utahns to join us in affirming established
76 ground rules for respectful public discourse and behavior.

77 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be posted on the Internet
78 websites of the Legislature and the Governor.