From:	ckoning0
To:	Grp. City Council and City Web Site; Bryan von Lossberg
Subject:	L.E.A.R.N. Missoula project
Date:	Wednesday, July 1, 2020 12:04:59 PM

Council Members:

It has come to my attention that the Missoula City Council's Ad Hoc Committee on Public Safety and Systemic Racism is gathering today to discuss the L.E.A.R.N. Missoula project as headed by Six Pony Hitch's founder Spider McKnight.

While I believe the backbone of this project to be inherently well-intentioned, it is wholly misguided. The idea that the Missoula Community must first invest funding into the research of systemic racism, oppression, and marginalization is to ignore the reality of our BIPOC neighbors and to divert funding from true action to the all-too-common notion of performative allyship. Our BIPOC community members live every day of their lives disproportionately affected by police brutality, housing insecurities, joblessness, unequal access to social services, bigotry, violence and every other toxic facet of systemic racism.

I implore you to educate yourself on your own time and your own dime.

It is your responsibility to do so.

By now, it should be clear that members of this community and citizens of this nation are shouting for the divestment and redistribution of police funding to community services that actively protect and provide for true public safety. The calls to action are specific in their nature. Again, if you need more education on this subject, it is your responsibility to listen. However, it is not your place to request public funding for the privilege of your education.

I implore you to hold additional public forums to provide a safe place for BIPOC voices to be heard and to invest funding into actionable items that are already being begged of you.

Though I believe your intentions to be good natured, they are indicative of nothing more than the white privilege which founded this nation and brought us to this current precipice.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Celeste Koning

Sent from my Verizon, Samsung Galaxy smartphone