

Madam Chairperson, members of the committee. I thank you for the opportunity to present to you today. My name is Matt Vergano and I am here to oppose this bill.

As a Colorado native, I put faith in our legislators to make decisions based on facts and not emotions.

I'd like to speak to section 1, paragraph E, Columbus acts of inhumanity are documented by Bartolome De Las Casas, a Spanish priest.

Before accepting it as relevant and reliable, one should read the full extensive article to be found on De Las Casas in Wikipedia. This bills quotations from De Las Casas are misleading for several reasons.

- De las Casas was only 8 years old when Christopher Columbus sailed his first voyage in 1492. De La Casas was only 18 years old when Columbus sailed his final voyage.
- For many years before and after becoming a priest, after Christopher Columbus was dead, De La Casas was a known native slave owner and personally participated in raids to capture additional slaves. In 1515, De Las Casas reformed his views of owning native slaves and advocated the use of African slaves through the Trans-Atlantic slave trade. De La Casas was clearly an aggressive missionary and is the linchpin in this argument for changing Columbus Day to Indigenous people's day.
- De Las Casas writings speak of the atrocities of the Spanish Conquistador's, and do not reflect Columbus due to the fact that De Las Casas Reformed his views 9 years after Columbus's death.

So I ask the committee, based on the facts that I have presented about De La Casas, do you want to support a bill based on the writings of a man who admittedly owned and hunted native slaves for himself and then later advocated for those native slaves to be replaced with African slaves from the Trans-Atlantic slave trade?

It is a fact that in the 15th and 16th century the world was a much different place and the morals and behaviors of people are much different than those of people today. On that note do you think it is fair to hold a 15th century man to 21st century morals?

Thank you

Matt Vergano