
PROCUREMENT INTEGRITY ANALYSIS

Charles Mitchell and George Washington Bush Study on Reparative Action

RFP No. 26-33740-001 | Washington State Department of Commerce

Prepared by:

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and Sharon Winesberry**

Representing:

**The yet-to-be-identified descendants of victims of United States chattel slavery
in Pierce County and across the state of Washington**

28th LD Constituents

**What Say U? Podcast, Channel 253, Tacoma, Washington
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WHAT THIS IS AND WHY IT MATTERS

This is a community analysis. The What Say U? Podcast Team went into the actual bid submissions and measured them against what the law actually says. The law is **ESSB 5167**, signed by Governor Ferguson on May 20, 2025. The eligibility floor is **Commerce's own published RFP requirements** (September 3, 2025). Everything in this document is drawn from those two sources and the bids themselves. Nothing is speculation.

Two bids are analyzed here: **Doctor Blackness Enterprises (DBE)**, led by Dr. Marcus Anthony Hunter, and **Truclusion** (Further Consulting Services, LLC). This document stays in one lane — a direct, evidence-based comparison of both proposals against the law. The findings speak for themselves.

Commerce's RFP stated: "Proposals that do not clearly meet or exceed all minimum qualifications listed above are non-responsive and will not be evaluated."

WHAT THE LAW REQUIRES

ESSB 5167, Section 129 is not vague. It lists eight specific requirements. The contracted team **MUST** have all of them:

- **(i) A Ph.D. in history, African American studies, sociology, American studies, ethnic studies, law, economics, public policy, or a related field — with a direct focus on reparations or United States chattel slavery**



- **(ii)** Verifiable expertise in peer-reviewed publications or policy reports on reparations, historical analysis, public policy, or economic valuation for descendants of chattel slavery victims
- **(iii)** Expertise in calculating the present value of uncompensated slave labor
- **(iv)** Substantial knowledge of the history and doctrine of U.S. chattel slavery reparations, and the ability to develop a lineage verification process for Washington descendants
- **(v)** Demonstrated commitment to reparations public policy
- **(vi)** Professional expertise in reparative justice
- **(vii)** A diverse team reflecting the lived experience of the communities being studied
- **(viii)** An experienced genealogist on the research team

The RFP added one **non-negotiable** eligibility floor: the team must have contributed to three peer-reviewed publications or policy reports on reparations or economic valuation. If a proposal doesn't clearly meet this, Commerce said it would not be evaluated. That standard either applies to everyone, or it was never real.

HOW TO READ THIS ANALYSIS: DEFINITION OF TERMS

Every criterion in this document is rated using one of five designations. Here is exactly what each one means.

RATING	WHAT IT MEANS
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNAMBIGUOUSLY MET	<p>The evidence is so overwhelming that no reasonable person could dispute it. This bidder doesn't just meet the requirement — they embody it. The record is so specific, so deep, and so well-documented that to argue otherwise would require either ignoring the evidence or arguing in bad faith. Reserved for the highest standard of proof.</p>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CLEARLY MET	<p>The bidder satisfies this requirement with direct, verifiable evidence from their bid. There is no need to stretch, assume, or give the benefit of the doubt. The proof is in the submitted documents. The bar is cleared.</p>
<input type="checkbox"/> SUBSTANTIALLY MET	<p>The bidder largely meets the requirement, but with a meaningful gap. The intent is there, and the foundation is credible, but something specific is missing — a named individual, a documented detail, or a piece of evidence the bid should have included. Not a disqualifying failure, but not a clean pass either.</p>
<input type="checkbox"/> DISPUTED	<p>The qualification appears in the bid, but it cannot be clearly attributed to the contracting entity itself. Specifically: the credential or publication record belongs to an independent contractor — not an employee of the firm. Independent contractors are not bound to the organization the way employees are. This raises a direct and legitimate question: does the contracting entity actually meet this standard,</p>

RATING	WHAT IT MEANS
 PARTIAL	<p>or is it borrowing someone else’s qualifications? Commerce must answer that question on the record.</p> <p>Some members of the team meet this requirement — but the organization’s own leadership does not.</p> <p>The law places responsibility on the contracting entity — the firm — not just on whoever happens to be on the team at any given moment. When the people who lead and represent the organization do not reflect the requirement, partial compliance is the accurate and honest rating. It is not a failing grade. It is an incomplete one.</p>
	<p>The experience or commitment claimed is too new and too limited to satisfy what the law requires.</p> <p>ESSB 5167 uses the word “demonstrated” — meaning a track record that existed before this contract opportunity arose. Two commissioned reports produced in the same year as the RFP do not constitute a demonstrated commitment to reparations public policy. Entry into a field is not the same as expertise in it. This rating flags where the timeline and depth of experience fall short of what the statute demands.</p>
 NOT MET	<p>The bid does not demonstrate compliance with this requirement.</p> <p>The evidence in the submitted documents does not satisfy what the law or the RFP requires. This is not an opinion or a preference — it is a direct comparison between what was submitted and what the statute mandates. In every case where this rating appears, the specific gap is identified and sourced.</p>

Important note: These ratings apply to what the bid documents show at the time of submission. We are not rating the people. We are rating what the evidence demonstrates against what the law requires.

WHAT THE BIDS ACTUALLY SHOW

Every finding below is drawn from the bids themselves.

1. Three Peer-Reviewed Publications on Reparations (RFP Minimum Eligibility)

Doctor Blackness Enterprises — Clearly Met

Dr. Hunter authored *Radical Reparations* (Oxford University Press) and *Chocolate Cities: The Black Map of American Life* (University of California Press), among 25+ peer-reviewed works on race and the legacy of chattel slavery. Senior Consultant Dreisen Heath authored reparations policy frameworks adopted by 16 governments and co-drafted federal reparations legislation.

This criterion is met many times over.



**CLEARLY
MET**

Dr. Hunter's book *Radical Reparations* alone satisfies this requirement. The full team multiplies it.

Truclusion — Disputed

Dr. Thomas Craemer (independent contractor, not a Truclusion employee) has published peer-reviewed reparations work. Marvin Slaughter (also an independent contractor) co-authored one peer-reviewed reparations article in 2022. **Truclusion's own designated lead staff person, Dr. Ashley Gardner, has zero peer-reviewed publications on reparations.** Her published research is entirely in sport management. The 57-page Municipal Reparations study Truclusion cites is their own client report — not independently peer-reviewed.



DISPUTED

Publications belong to independent contractors, not Truclusion as the contracting entity. The firm's own lead staff has no reparations publication record. Commerce has not explained how this bid cleared the non-responsiveness standard.

2. Ph.D. with Direct Focus on Reparations or Chattel Slavery — ESSB §(a)(i)

The statute says "with a direct focus on reparations or United States chattel slavery." Not adjacent to it. Not in a related area. Direct focus.

Doctor Blackness Enterprises — Unambiguously Met

Dr. Hunter holds a Ph.D. in Sociology from Northwestern University. His entire career — every book, every article, every commission, every congressional appearance — centers on race, reparations, and chattel slavery's enduring impact. He chairs the Department of Sociology and Criminology at Howard University. He is a member of the Walter & Patricia Rodney Commission on Reparations. He wrote *Radical Reparations*. He testified before Congress on reparations. This is the person the law was written to find.



**UNAMBIGUOUSLY
MET**

Ph.D. in Sociology. Career-long direct focus on reparations and chattel slavery. Full stop.

Truclusion — Not Met by Lead Staff

Dr. Ashley Gardner — Truclusion's designated lead staff person — holds a Ph.D. in Kinesiology and Sport Studies from the University of Tennessee. Her published research is in sport management: student career transitions, diversity framing in athletic organizations, fencing tournament site selection. Kinesiology and Sport Studies is not among the disciplines listed in ESSB 5167(a)(i). Her research record shows no direct focus on reparations or chattel slavery — at all.

Yes, Dr. Craemer (independent contractor) holds a Ph.D. in Public Policy with reparations work. But Dr. Craemer is not Truclusion’s lead staff person. **Commerce designated Dr. Gardner as lead. And Dr. Gardner’s Ph.D. does not meet this statute.**

X NOT MET by Lead Staff	Truclusion’s lead staff person’s Ph.D. is in Kinesiology and Sport Studies. The law requires a direct focus on reparations or chattel slavery. Those are not the same thing, and Commerce has not explained how it found otherwise.
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3. Experienced Genealogist on the Team — ESSB §(a)(viii)

Doctor Blackness Enterprises — Substantially Met

DBE commits to a genealogist from the Afro-American Historical and Genealogical Society (AAHGS), Washington Chapter — the premier national body for African American genealogical research. No individual is named. That’s a gap.

⚠ SUBSTANTIALLY MET	The right organization is named. The individual should have been identified.
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Truclusion — Clearly Met

Mica Anders, MFA — 20+ years specializing in African American genealogy. First-ever History Fellow at the Minnesota African American Heritage Museum. Minnesota Genealogical Society Pioneer Award. Invited speaker at the Saint Paul Recovery Act Community Reparations Commission and the BLM Minnesota Reparations Now Conference. Member of APG and AAHGS. **This is Truclusion’s strongest qualification, and it is genuinely strong.**

☑ CLEARLY MET	Mica Anders is named, credentialed, and directly experienced. No dispute.
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4. Expertise in Valuing Uncompensated Slave Labor — ESSB §(a)(iii)

Doctor Blackness Enterprises — Met

The DBE proposal lays out specific economic methodology. Dr. Hunter’s membership on the Walter & Patricia Rodney Commission on Reparations — the most serious active reparations body in the country — places him directly in the community that is developing these calculations. Dreisen Heath has designed reparations cost-benefit frameworks adopted by 16 governments.

☑ MET	Documented through commission membership, published scholarship, and adopted governmental policy frameworks.
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Truclusion — Partially Met Through Contractors Only

Dr. Craemer and Marvin Slaughter have legitimate reparations economics credentials. Both are independent contractors. Neither is a Truclusion employee. **Truclusion’s own organizational staff do not demonstrate this expertise.**


**CONTRACTORS
ONLY**

Expertise exists in independent contractors whose retention is not guaranteed by the contract. Not demonstrated by Truclusion’s own staff.

5. Substantial Knowledge of Chattel Slavery Reparations Doctrine — ESSB §(a)(iv)

Doctor Blackness Enterprises — Unambiguously Met

Dr. Hunter wrote *Radical Reparations*. He addressed the United Nations on reparations. He testified before Congress. He serves on the Walter & Patricia Rodney Commission on Reparations. He was an invited speaker at the California Reparations Commission. Dreisen Heath drafted the text of federal reparations legislation. **This team doesn’t just know the doctrine — they helped build it.**


**UNAMBIGUOUSLY
MET**

Dr. Hunter and Dreisen Heath represent some of the deepest reparations doctrine expertise in the United States.

Truclusion — Not Met by Lead Staff

Dr. Gardner’s expertise is in **sport management and discrimination research** in athletic contexts. Her 57-page Municipal Reparations study surveys existing city-level programs — it is not evidence of deep knowledge of chattel slavery reparations history and doctrine. Dr. Craemer has published on doctrine. Marvin Slaughter chairs the Illinois reparations commission as a volunteer. **Both are independent contractors. Truclusion as a firm does not demonstrate this expertise through its own organizational leadership.**



**NOT MET
by Lead Staff**

The doctrinal knowledge required by ESSB 5167(a)(iv) is not demonstrated by Truclusion’s lead staff. It exists only in independent contractors.

6. Demonstrated Commitment to Reparations Public Policy — ESSB §(a)(v)


Doctor Blackness Enterprises — Clearly Met

Dr. Hunter: invited speaker at the California Reparations Commission, NJ Reparations Council, and U.S. Congress on Reparations, Racial Healing, and Transformation. Dreisen Heath: technical assistance to 27 states, drafted federal reparations legislation, advised the UN Permanent Forum on People of African Descent. **This is not a new interest. This is a decades-long calling for both of them.**

 CLEARLY MET	Sustained, documented, multi-decade reparations policy commitment at every level from local to international.
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Truclusion — Recent and Thin


Truclusion’s documented reparations work is two commissioned reports, both from 2025 — the same year as this RFP. Their Managing Principal’s background is in corporate media and municipal outreach. Their lead researcher’s background is sport management. **Recent entry into a field is not the same as demonstrated commitment to it.**

 RECENT AND THIN	Two commissioned reports from 2025. Reparations commitment is concentrated in independent contractors, not in the firm’s own leadership.
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7. Diverse Team Reflecting Lived Experience — ESSB §(a)(vii)


Doctor Blackness Enterprises — Clearly Met

The full DBE team — Dr. Hunter, Dreisen Heath, Christian Green, and Howard University faculty — is Black, grounded in descendant communities, and has professional roots deep in the lived experience this study is meant to document. Dreisen Heath has facilitated 50+ community engagement sessions with 8,000+ reparations stakeholders.

 CLEARLY MET	A Black-led team with deep personal and professional roots in the communities this study is designed to serve.
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Truclusion — Partial

Some Truclusion team members have lived experience as people of color. The firm’s organizational leadership — its Managing Principal — is not rooted in the descendant community this study serves.

 PARTIAL	Some team members carry lived experience. Organizational leadership does not reflect the primary affected community.
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SIDE-BY-SIDE: THE FULL COMPARISON

Every cell reflects documented evidence from the bid submissions and the law.

ESSB 5167 / RFP Requirement	Doctor Blackness Enterprises	Truclusion
3 peer-reviewed reparations publications (RFP Minimum Eligibility)	 CLEARLY MET	 DISPUTED

ESSB 5167 / RFP Requirement	Doctor Blackness Enterprises	Truclusion
Ph.D. with direct focus on reparations or chattel slavery — ESSB §(a)(i)	☑ CLEARLY MET	✗ NOT MET by lead staff
Experienced genealogist on team — ESSB §(a)(viii)	⚠ Org named, individual unnamed	☑ CLEARLY MET — Mica Anders
Valuation of uncompensated slave labor — ESSB §(a)(iii)	☑ MET	⚠ Contractors only
Chattel slavery doctrine knowledge — ESSB §(a)(iv)	☑ UNAMBIGUOUSLY MET	✗ NOT MET by lead staff
Demonstrated reparations policy commitment — ESSB §(a)(v)	☑ CLEARLY MET	⚠ Recent and thin (2025 only)
Diverse team with lived experience — ESSB §(a)(vii)	☑ CLEARLY MET	⚠ Partial

THE BOTTOM LINE

Measured against the law Governor Ferguson signed and the eligibility standard Commerce published, **Doctor Blackness Enterprises is the clearly more qualified and substantially more compliant bid.** On five of seven criteria, DBE meets or exceeds the statutory standard. Truclusion fails on the two most fundamental requirements — the Ph.D. mandate and chattel slavery doctrine knowledge — at the level of its own lead staff person. The person Commerce put in charge of this contract does not hold a qualifying degree in the field the law specifies.

Truclusion does have real strengths. Mica Anders is a genuinely qualified genealogist. Dr. Craemer and Marvin Slaughter bring legitimate reparations economics knowledge. We acknowledge that. But those qualifications belong to independent contractors — not to Truclusion as a firm. And contractor participation does not substitute for the firm’s own compliance with the law.

And the proposal that was submitted by one of the most credentialed reparations scholars in the country — the man who wrote *Radical Reparations*, who chairs Howard University’s Sociology and Criminology department, who has testified before Congress on reparations — deserved to be evaluated on its full merits against the law. This analysis is our contribution to making sure that the record is clear.

We are not asking for a do-over out of preference. We are asking for the law to mean what the Governor signed. The descendants of Charles Mitchell and George Washington Bush deserve a study built on a foundation we can trust.

The milk ain't clean. And we will keep saying so until Commerce provides real answers.

PREPARED BY

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SOURCES

- **ESSB 5167, Section 129** — Signed by Governor Bob Ferguson, May 20, 2025
- **Commerce RFP No. 26-33740-001** — Published September 3, 2025
- **Truclusion Bid** — Further Consulting Services, LLC DBA Truclusion (P2122-25, pages 253–323)
- **Doctor Blackness Enterprises Bid** — Submitted October 15, 2025, Dr. Marcus Anthony Hunter
- **WENA Legislator Briefing Document** — Submitted March 20, 2026