

Chicago is a Welcoming City

WHEREAS, the City of Chicago is the third largest city in the United States with families from more than 140 countries; and

WHEREAS, the City of Chicago, New York City, Los Angeles, and other major cities are the key drivers of the nation's economic growth and social and cultural innovation; and

WHEREAS, this growth and dynamism goes hand in hand with these cities' history of welcoming and embracing immigrants and refugees from around the world; and

WHEREAS, many members of the Chicago City Council including the Mayor proudly embrace their immigrant roots; and

WHEREAS, like most major cities, the City of Chicago passed legislation designating the city as a welcoming community for all immigrants, refugees, and undocumented individuals and their families to protect them from discriminatory practices and policies; and

WHEREAS, nationally there has been an increase in reports of racialized, xenophobic, and Islamophobic rhetoric and violent acts of harassment, targeting Muslims, refugees, undocumented immigrants, and communities of color, including Asians, Blacks, Latinos, and Middle Easterners; and

WHEREAS, while many callous pundits and politicians refer to undocumented individuals as 'illegal' immigrants or aliens, in the City of Chicago we call them our family members, neighbors, friends, and community leaders; and

WHEREAS, like other welcoming communities, the City of Chicago recognizes and embraces the humanity in the conversation around immigration policy and rejects a construct where we refer to fellow human beings and their life as an 'illegal'; and

WHEREAS, with the election of Donald Trump as the 45th President of the United States, we, the members of the City Council and the Mayor, are gravely concerned with his plan to strip federal funding from all cities with policies that protect undocumented immigrants and other non-citizen residents from deportation; and

WHEREAS, the City Council and the Mayor are united and resolve to fight any effort to strip cities that welcome and protect immigrants of federal funding; and

WHEREAS, the City Council and the Mayor are committed to partner with councils and mayors from other communities around the country to stand with our immigrant residents and defend policies that welcome and protect immigrants, including New York City, Los Angeles, San Francisco, New Orleans, and Minneapolis to; and

WHEREAS, today we seek to affirm our commitment to all Chicagoans with the following value statements related to the City of Chicago's Welcoming City Ordinance:

1. The City of Chicago is and always will be a city that welcomes immigrants and refugees and will always respect, honor, and celebrate all people and communities.
2. The City of Chicago will not assign the term nor recognize 'illegal immigrant' or 'illegal alien.'
3. The City of Chicago will fight any agenda and effort to strip or cut federal funding because of our Welcoming City Ordinance, or other policies defending and protecting undocumented immigrants.
4. The City of Chicago commits to working with community advocates, policy experts, and legal advocates to strengthen Chicago's Welcoming City Ordinance taking into consideration new threats to immigrant communities.
5. The City of Chicago will work with local law enforcement to make sure that they are ready to respond to hate crimes or other request for services from immigrant communities, including being able to assist people with limited language proficiency and connecting immigrants with information about legal services;
6. The City of Chicago always has and will continue honoring all residents regardless of race, heritage, culture, ethnicity, country of origin, religion, legal status, sexual orientation, and gender identity.
7. The City of Chicago will reject any effort to create religious litmus tests or screening for individuals or families to navigate the immigration process and most important, reject any federal or state effort to create a registry of individuals based on religion or ethnicity; and

WHEREAS, while other communities that welcome and protect immigrants such as Los Angeles and New York City have issued similar statements with steadfast support from their governors, Illinois Governor Bruce Rauner has yet to issue a statement regarding President-Elect Trump's plan to strip federal funding from Chicago; and

WHEREAS, we the members of the City Council and the Mayor are concerned with Governor Rauner's past statements regarding resettlement of Syrian refugees; and

WHEREAS, immigrant rights, legal-service providers, and community advocate are working on ways to strengthen policies that support and protect undocumented immigrants in the state of Illinois and the City of Chicago, such as the TRUST Act; and

WHEREAS, this resolution enshrines the Chicago City Council's and the Mayor's commitment to partnering with other communities around the country that welcome and protect immigrants to stand up to any attempt by the President Elect to hold federal funding to the nation's economic centers ransom to an inhumane immigration agenda; and

WHEREAS, this resolution also enshrines our value statements and serves as a call to action to Illinois Governor Rauner; now, therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, that we, the Members of the City Council, assembled this day on November 16, 2016 invite Illinois Governor Rauner to add his name as a signatory to this resolution and request that he do the following:

1. Engage in dialogue on immigration policy with a goal to develop and promote policies that protect, serve, and honor all immigrant, refugee, and undocumented family members and neighbors in Chicago and around Illinois; and
2. Actively support policies that protect immigrants in the state of Illinois proposed by immigrant rights advocates, such as the TRUST Act.
3. Partner with Governors Cuomo of New York and Brown of California and Mayors Emanuel, De Blasio, and Garcetti and other elected leaders representing cities that welcome and protect immigrants to meet with the President Elect and his transition team and fight any effort to reduce or cut funding to our cities or any effort which harms immigrants, refugees, and undocumented family members and neighbors.
4. Encourage other states and cities to declare themselves to be welcoming cities and states for immigrants.
5. Issue a statement of support for cities that welcome our undocumented family members and neighbors, and condemn any effort to strip the City of Chicago of federal funding.
6. Attend and speak at a special City Council meeting held solely for the purpose of discussing the President Elect's plans for cities that welcome and protect immigrants

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that suitable copies of this resolution be delivered to the Office of the Governor of Illinois and to the transition offices of President Elect Trump.