

RESOLUTION NO. 79-14

**RESOLUTION URGING THE CITY OF RICHMOND TO SUPPORT EFFORTS AT
THE CONGRESSIONAL LEVEL TO ADDRESS THE GROWING
HUMANITARIAN CRISIS OF UNACCOMPANIED CHILDREN FLEEING
VIOLENCE FROM CENTRAL AMERICA**

WHEREAS, the City of Richmond has a strong tradition of embracing and valuing diversity and respecting the civil and human rights of all regardless of their immigration status; and

WHEREAS, an emergency humanitarian crisis is taking place at the United States-Mexican border where tens of thousands of unaccompanied children from Central America including countries, such as El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua are being apprehended and detained in crowded shelters, detention centers and facilities on military bases where they have been subjected to inhumane living conditions for indeterminate periods of time; and

WHEREAS, one fourth of the residents of Richmond are persons who were born in foreign countries and who have come to the U.S. in search of better lives for themselves and their families; and

WHEREAS, these are unacceptable conditions that the United States Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and Human Health Services (HHS) are forced to address as they await the passage of comprehensive immigration reform; and

WHEREAS, data collected by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) shows that since October 2013, approximately 57,000 Central American children have fled from their home countries into the United States, which represents a substantial increase from prior years; and

WHEREAS, it is estimated that the number of children entering the United States in FY2014 will exceed 60,000, with an average of 120-400 children crossing the border each day; and

WHEREAS, more girls are migrating than in previous years because of regional increases in gender-based violence; and

WHEREAS, many of these children are seeking to reunify with their parents, who themselves came to the United States in order to survive and help their families survive in the wake of war and failed economic and trade policies; and

WHEREAS, the United Nations High Commission on Refugees has concluded after close study that these children qualify as bona fide refugees fleeing for fear of their lives from narco-traffickers and/or gangs and has urged the United States to confer refugee status upon them; and

WHEREAS, the United States Immigration and Nationality Act grants the President of the United States the authority to designate these children as "refugees" under Section 207(b) of the Immigration & Nationality Act, 8 US Code Section 1157; and

WHEREAS; National experts and policy makers agree our federal immigration policy is broken, inconsistent and in need of reform; and

WHEREAS, in 2007, the City of Richmond adopted Resolution NO. 11-07 reaffirming its support for comprehensive immigration reform that is fair, just and humane; and

WHEREAS, the City of Richmond welcomes and values all of its residents and supports them to live and work free from discrimination, hostility, abuse, violence, exploitation and fear of local, state and federal law enforcement; and

WHEREAS, the City of Richmond wishes to affirm and declare that Richmond

recognizes the contributions of immigrant communities in the City and throughout California's economy and revitalization of the City's neighborhoods; and

WHEREAS, our communities, congregations, labor unions, schools and community-based organizations have a long history of welcoming children and families fleeing violence with compassion and support services and of advocating for refugee and immigrant rights; now

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the City of Richmond calls upon President Barack Obama and our federal, state and local officials to:

1. Stop the deportations of all children by granting them refugee status under domestic and international law, access to legal representation and due process;
2. Support congressional funding for humanitarian care and essential services for the children; reject further expenditures on border patrol and militarization of the border.
3. Support H.R. 4936, the Vulnerable Immigrant Voice Act of 2014, to provide legal representation to unaccompanied minors and mentally disabled individuals during immigration proceedings.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Council directs staff to send a copy of this resolution along with a cover letter to President Barack Obama, Governor Jerry Brown, Congressman George Miller, Senator Barbara Boxer, Senator Dianne Feinstein, State Senator Loni Hancock and Assemblymember Nancy Skinner.

I certify that the foregoing resolution was passed and adopted by the City Council of the City of Richmond at a regular meeting thereof, held on September 16, 2014, by the following vote:

AYES: Councilmembers Bates, Boozé, Butt, Myrick, Rogers, Vice Mayor Beckles, and Mayor McLaughlin.

NOES: None.

ABSENT: None.

ABSTENTION: None.

DIANE HOLMES
CLERK OF THE CITY OF RICHMOND

(SEAL)

Approved:

GAYLE MCLAUGHLIN
Mayor

Approved as to form:

BRUCE GOODMILLER
City Attorney

State of California }
County of Contra Costa : ss.
City of Richmond }

I certify that the foregoing is a true copy of **Resolution No. 79-14**, finally passed and adopted by the City Council of the City of Richmond at a regular meeting held on September 16, 2014.