

RESOLUTION NO.

WHEREAS, the City of Austin prides itself as a community that welcomes all, celebrates diversity, and appreciates the immense economic, social, and cultural contributions that immigrants have made to this city, state, and nation; and

WHEREAS, the City Council recognizes that United States Census Bureau statistics indicate that 19% of Austinites and 16% of Texans are foreign-born; and

WHEREAS, Council passed Resolution 20140320-049 declaring Austin a Welcoming City to celebrate the contributions of immigrants, and to demonstrate that the City strives to include immigrants in all aspects of our municipality, to encourage their participation in civic activities, to maximize their contributions to our local economy and culture, and to provide access to available resources and services; and

WHEREAS, Council also passed Resolution 20130228-034 urging the U.S. Congress to enact legislation accomplishing comprehensive immigration reform; and

WHEREAS, Council also passed Resolution 20140626-099 opposing the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) Secure Communities program, a program discontinued by the Department of Homeland Security under President Barack Obama's executive order of November 20, 2014; and

WHEREAS, the City actively works to recruit businesses, encourage job creation, promote entrepreneurship, and ensure access to education and activities to grow the local, state and national economies, and to ensure that its residents have economic opportunities to support themselves and their families; and

WHEREAS, Council recognizes that our nation's current broken federal immigration system hinders the City's ability to maximize economic growth and its efforts to address poverty; and

WHEREAS, Council takes note that in the key Science/Technology/Engineering/Mathematics (STEM) fields of computer science, computer programming, and software development, immigrants comprise over 50% of U.S. workers with master's degrees, and further takes note that 25% of Austin's tech entrepreneurs are foreign-born; and

WHEREAS, Council also takes note that a June 2014 poll from the Brookings Institution and the Public Religion Research Institute indicates that 62% of Americans favor a path allowing undocumented immigrants to become citizens, and that 79% are in favor of allowing legal residency; and

WHEREAS, the U.S. Congress has failed to pass comprehensive immigration reform, despite efforts to have them do so by the administrations of both President George W. Bush and President Barack Obama; and

WHEREAS, our nation is in urgent need of comprehensive immigration reform to adequately address issues for all citizens and our immigrant population relating to public safety, national security, economic prosperity, and respect for human rights and civil liberties; and

WHEREAS, President Obama took executive action on November 20, 2014 to normalize the status of approximately 5 million of the estimated 11 million undocumented immigrants currently living in the United States; and

WHEREAS, in the absence of comprehensive immigration reform from the U.S. Congress, President Obama's executive action will lead to higher wages, increased purchasing power, "fair share" payment of taxes, and the generation of new jobs for Americans as businesses grow to serve legalized workers; and

WHEREAS, President Obama's executive action will strengthen public safety in this community and others, and will help dissipate the fear that pervades the lives of many immigrant and mixed-status families, including the fear that was

generated by the Secure Communities program which the President's executive action discontinued; and

WHEREAS, Council recognizes that the City of Austin Commission on Immigrant Affairs passed a resolution on December 8, 2014 which was in support of President Obama's executive action, and Council declares itself to be aligned with such position; and

WHEREAS, Council is in support of the work of the Cities United for Immigration Action Coalition, formed to assist implementation of President Obama's executive action on the local level, as well as to continue to urge congressional action on immigration reform; **NOW, THEREFORE,**

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF AUSTIN:

That the City Council strongly supports President Obama in his executive action of November 20, 2014, and is fully supportive of his administration's future similar efforts to effect comprehensive federal immigration reform.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED

That the Council officially endorses the mission of the Cities United for Immigration Action Coalition in support of President Obama's executive action and continuing efforts directed at immigration reform.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED

That the City Manager is directed to send copies of this Resolution to our state and federal government representatives, including the President of the United States, the Congressional leadership, the Congressional delegation representing Austin, the Governor and Lieutenant Governor of the State of Texas, the Speaker of the Texas House of Representatives, and the Texas legislative delegation representing Austin.

ADOPTED: _____, 2014

ATTEST: _____

Jannette S. Goodall
City Clerk