

# CITY OF OAKLAND



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Date: April 14, 2016  
To: Members of the Rules and Legislation Committee  
From: Councilmember Rebecca Kaplan and Councilmember Abel Guillen  
Re: Resolution Urging The United States Congress To End The Trade Embargo on Cuba

Dear Members of the Rules and Legislation Committee,

The economic, commercial and financial embargo on Cuba has been imposed on the island of Cuba since 1960. The embargo has had a detrimental impact on the development of Cuba. It has also had adverse effects on the Cuban citizens and has not achieved its intended goal. Cuba poses no threat to the U.S.

On July 20, 2015 diplomatic relations were officially restored between the U.S. and Cuba and a new era of relations between the two countries were re-established when both re-opened their respective embassies. In March 2016, President Obama was the first sitting US President to visit the island of Cuba in over eighty years and remittance and travel restrictions for U.S. citizens have been eased.

It is time to take it a step further, end this Cold War policy and resume full diplomatic relations with Cuba. The embargo currently serves no purpose; it only harms the people of Cuba and harms the United States' international reputation.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Rebecca Kaplan".

Councilmember At-Large Rebecca Kaplan

**DRAFT**

City Attorney's Office

# OAKLAND CITY COUNCIL

Resolution No. \_\_\_\_\_ C.M.S.

INTRODUCED BY COUNCILMEMBERS REBECCA KAPLAN and ABEL GUILLEN

## **RESOLUTION URGING THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS TO END THE TRADE EMBARGO ON CUBA**

**WHEREAS**, in 1960, the United States government imposed an economic, commercial and financial embargo on Cuba; and

**WHEREAS**, on April 11, 2015, Presidents Barack Obama and Raúl Castro shook hands for the first time at the Summit of the Americas in Panama, signaling a shift in diplomatic relations since the two countries severed their ties decades ago; and

**WHEREAS**, in March 2016, President Obama was the first sitting U.S. President to visit the island of Cuba in over eighty years, and

**WHEREAS**, on July 20, 2015 diplomatic relations were officially restored between the U.S. and Cuba and a new era of relations between the two countries were re-established when both re-opened their respective embassies; and

**WHEREAS**, the embargo harms the citizens of Cuba who suffer as a result of the policy, not the government; and

**WHEREAS**, we are in the 21<sup>st</sup> century and the U.S. embargo against Cuba is a policy of the Cold War era that has not achieved its goal; and

**WHEREAS**, the embargo inhibits the exchange of ideas, medicine, culture, the development of sports relations, investment opportunities; and

**WHEREAS**, the embargo denies citizens of both Cuba and the United States access to each respective country's medical technology and advancements and denies the exchange of vital medicines and equipment that could lead to improved health for the people of both nations; and

**WHEREAS**, Cuba has been a friendly international neighbor by exporting and doctors and medicines to other developing nations to combat diseases like Ebola and other international epidemics plaguing some of the most impoverished nations on the planet; and

**WHEREAS**, Cuba poses no threat to the United States; and

**WHEREAS**, many believe the embargo has a negative effect on the international opinion and the reputation of the U.S.; and

**WHEREAS**, many people of the United States and in the world believe this embargo is ineffective, inhumane and is in violation of U.S. laws and international conventions; and

**WHEREAS**, human rights groups including Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, and the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights have all been extremely critical of the embargo; and

**WHEREAS**, it has been estimated that the embargo has cost the U.S. over \$1 billion dollars in lost sales of commercial exports; and

**WHEREAS**, ending the embargo will create jobs in the U.S. and will create new economic opportunities with the export of technology, food, medicine, and other goods; and

**WHEREAS**, the embargo is antithetical to the American ideas of security, sovereignty, free trade and markets, and mutual respect; now, therefore, be it

**RESOLVED**, that the City Council of Oakland, California, hereby urges the United States Congress to end the trade embargo on Cuba.

IN COUNCIL, OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA, \_\_\_\_\_

PASSED BY THE FOLLOWING VOTE:

AYES - BROOKS, CAMPBELL WASHINGTON, GALLO, GUILLEN, KALB, KAPLAN,  
REID AND PRESIDENT GIBSON MCELHANEY

NOES -  
ABSENT -  
ABSTENTION -

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
LATONDA SIMMONS  
City Clerk and Clerk of the Council of the City  
of Oakland, California