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Oakland City Attorney's Office

OAKLAND CITY COUNCIL

Resolution No. _____ C.M.S.

INTRODUCED BY MAYOR JEAN QUAN, VICE MAYOR LARRY REID, AND
COUNCILMEMBER NOEL GALLO

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

WHEREAS, the City of Oakland 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, 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, during their dangerous journey to the United States, many children become victims of trafficking, sexual abuse and 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, In 2007, the Oakland City Council adopted a "Sanctuary City" Resolution No. 80584, calling for a moratorium on immigration raids and for the passage of fair and humane federal immigration laws; as well as declaring Oakland a refuge for immigrants from all countries; providing equal access to public services and civil protections without regard to an individual's immigration status, the City had earlier passed a resolution stating Oakland was a refuge for those from El Salvador, Guatemala Haiti and South Africa; and

WHEREAS, the City of Oakland wishes to affirm and declare that Oakland is a City of Refuge for immigrants from all countries, and 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 Oakland assist in the humanitarian relief effort by collaborating with local, state and federal organizations to address the short and long term needs of unaccompanied immigrant children entering into Oakland and the East Bay region by:

1. Publicizing the need for host families and sponsors who can provide safe and stable housing opportunities for the unaccompanied children and work to move children from shelters into homes of relatives or host families as soon as possible; and
2. Identifying city resources to ensure that City Departments, in partnership with non-profit organizations, can offer a continuum of culturally competent relief services to meet the medical, mental health, educational and legal needs of these children and their families, and, be it

FURTHER RESOLVED: to call 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.

IN COUNCIL, OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA,

PASSED BY THE FOLLOWING VOTE:

AYES - BROOKS, GALLO, GIBSON MCELHANEY, KALB, KAPLAN,
 SCHAAF, REID AND PRESIDENT KERNIGHAN

NOES –
ABSENT –
ABSTENTION –

ATTEST:

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