

APPROVED AS TO FORM AND LEGALITY


CITY ATTORNEY'S OFFICE

OAKLAND CITY COUNCIL

RESOLUTION NO. _____ C.M.S.

INTRODUCED BY COUNCILMEMBER TREVA REID

RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING JANUARY 2024 AS NATIONAL SLAVERY AND HUMAN TRAFFICKING PREVENTION MONTH IN THE CITY OF OAKLAND

WHEREAS, the United States Senate designated January 11th as National Human Trafficking Awareness Day in 2007, and beginning in 2010 by presidential proclamation, each January has been designated National Slavery and Human Trafficking Prevention Month; and

WHEREAS, in 2014, a resolution, authored by former Councilmember Lynette Gibson McElhaney and Councilmember Gallo, was first adopted by the City Council, proclaiming January as National Slavery and Human Trafficking Prevention Month in the City of Oakland and urging all Oakland residents to actively engage in the elimination of commercial sex and human trafficking in Oakland; and

WHEREAS, in 2017, a resolution, authored by former Vice Mayor Annie Campbell Washington and Councilmember Gibson McElhaney, was adopted recognizing January of every year as Human Trafficking Awareness and Prevention Month in the City of Oakland and urging all Oakland residents, businesses, and organizations to actively engage in the elimination of commercial sex and human trafficking in Oakland; and

WHEREAS, human trafficking is a public health issue that affects individuals, families, and communities across generations, exploiting the most vulnerable among us and weakening our collective well-being; and

WHEREAS, human trafficking involves commercial sexual exploitation and labor exploitation. Sex trafficking is defined as “a commercial sex act that is induced by force, fraud, or coercion,” but if the person has not attained the age of 18 years old, force, fraud, or coercion is not required; and

WHEREAS, labor trafficking is defined as “the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for labor or services through the use of force, fraud, or coercion for subjection to involuntary servitude, peonage, debt bondage, or slavery;” and

WHEREAS, human trafficking is a human rights violation and a violation of both federal and California law. It promotes the breakdown of families and communities, fuels organized crime, undermines public health, and imposes large economic costs; and

WHEREAS, human trafficking counters our City’s motto of “Love Life”. Through the adoption of this motto, we denounce violence in all its forms and the conditions that create it, seek to protect every single life in Oakland from acts of violence, including human trafficking, and provide support and love for all who suffer under the conditions that violence creates, which responds to our united care and concern to inform and guide our practices in our quest to make Oakland a safe, just, sustainable, equitable, and vibrant city; and

WHEREAS, the FBI has identified California and the Oakland/San Francisco Bay Area as areas of high prevalence for human trafficking. Although human trafficking is illegal, those victimized by it often do not know that help is available or where to seek assistance; and

WHEREAS, while human trafficking can happen to anyone, certain populations are disproportionately vulnerable, including Black girls, women, and gender-expansive youth affected by early life abuse, sexual violence, and poverty; those systemically marginalized and underserved; and those who lack access to stable housing, employment or social safety nets, work visas, or employment protections that would safeguard them from exploitation; and

WHEREAS, systemically marginalized populations experience the compounding impacts of racism, multigenerational poverty, misogyny, xenophobia, and community divestment; and

WHEREAS, the City of Oakland, California, is dedicated to addressing the injustices experienced by these underserved populations to prevent future victimization; and

WHEREAS, on May 30, 2023, the Oakland City Council unanimously adopted a resolution sponsored by District 7 Councilmember Treva Reid in support of California Senate Bill 673 (Bradford), which would establish an “Ebony Alert” to help locate missing black youth and black women; and

WHEREAS, the City resolution passed due to strong coalition support and additional street-level outreach efforts to spread awareness of community safety strategies and Councilmember Reid, who is a member of Oakland Mayor Sheng Thao’s newly formed Mayor’s Advisory Council on Human Trafficking; and

WHEREAS, according to data from the 2019 United States Census, people who are Black or African American make up 13.4 percent of the United States population. However, nearly 40 percent of missing persons are people of color; and

WHEREAS, Black youth 18 years of age or under make up 38 percent of missing person cases, and Black children make up about 33 percent of all missing child cases and receive less media attention to the fact that they are missing; and

WHEREAS, in 2022, there were 62,200 reports of missing children in California, and 34,389 were female. In Alameda County, 1,873 reports of missing children were filed in 2022.

Of the 1,500 missing person reports in 2022 in the City of Oakland, over 400 were Black women; and

WHEREAS, in addition to making up a disproportionate percentage of all missing people, Black women, and girls are at increased risk of being harmed. The Congressional Black Caucus Foundation found in a two-year study of human trafficking incidents across the country that 40 percent of sex trafficking victims were identified as Black women; and

WHEREAS, SB 673 was signed into law in October 2023 by Governor Gavin Newsom, making California the first state to create an alert notification system to address the crisis of missing black children and young black women ages 12 to 25. With the Governor’s signature, the Ebony Alert became law on January 1, 2024; and

WHEREAS, SB 673 authorizes law enforcement agencies to request that the California Highway Patrol activate an Ebony Alert if the investigating agency determines that it would be helpful. Similar to the Amber Alert, the Ebony Alert would activate electronic highway signs to alert the public to the missing person. Additionally, SB 673 also encourages television, cable, online, radio, and social media outlets to cooperate with disseminating the information contained in an Ebony Alert; and

WHEREAS, public awareness about human trafficking and the nuances of this violation of human rights still need to reach broader communities; and

WHEREAS, people who have experienced human trafficking have critical perspectives and expertise, and the City of Oakland is committed to uplifting their voices to engage and collaborate with them to strengthen human trafficking-related programs and services; and

WHEREAS, the Oakland City Council is dedicated to ensuring anyone impacted by human trafficking can receive person-centered, trauma-informed, and culturally and linguistically appropriate care; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED: That the Oakland City Council does hereby recognize January 2024 as National Slavery and Human Trafficking Prevention Month in the City of Oakland.

IN COUNCIL, OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA,

PASSED BY THE FOLLOWING VOTE:

AYES - FIFE, GALLO, JENKINS, KALB, KAPLAN, RAMACHANDRAN, REID, AND
PRESIDENT FORTUNATO BAS

NOES –
ABSENT –
ABSTENTION –

3325986v2/MJM

ATTEST: _____
ASHA REED
City Clerk and Clerk of the Council of the
City of Oakland, California