


CITY ATTORNEY'S OFFICE

OAKLAND CITY COUNCIL

RESOLUTION NO. _____ C.M.S.

INTRODUCED BY COUNCILMEMBER CARROLL FIFE

RESOLUTION RESPECTFULLY URGING GOVERNOR GAVIN NEWSOM FOR CLEMENCY BY GRANTING PARDONS TO MARIA LEGARDA, NGHIEP KE LAM, CHANTHON BUN, AND BOREY AI, REHABILITATED, FORMERLY INCARCERATED INDIVIDUALS WHO SERVE THE COMMUNITY THROUGH THEIR WORK WITH THE ASIAN PRISONER SUPPORT COMMITTEE

WHEREAS, Asian Prisoner Support Committee (APSC) is a grassroots non-profit organization based in and serving Oakland, whose mission is to provide direct support to Asian and Pacific Islander (API) prisoners and to raise awareness about the growing number of APIs being imprisoned, detained, and deported; and

WHEREAS, since 2002, APSC has led programs in prisons, organized anti-deportation campaigns, provided resources to “lifers,” and developed culturally relevant reentry programs, helping break the cycle of incarceration by allowing people coming home from prison to successfully rebuild their lives; and

WHEREAS, after being sent to prison as youths and over two decades of incarceration, “the APSC4”—Maria Legarda, Nghiep Ke Lam, Chanthon Bun, and Borey Ai—transformed their lives, took accountability, and left prison as community leaders who today, as staff at APSC, work to end mass incarceration through advocacy, reentry services for people coming home from prison, and by facilitating in-prison programming; and

WHEREAS, with a recidivism rate of less than five percent, the APSC4 have helped over five hundred individuals successfully navigate reentry after incarceration, also making Oakland safer; and

WHEREAS, each of the APSC4 came to the United States early in their lives to escape the oppressive regimes and conditions in their home countries, and have little to no knowledge of or ties to their countries of origin; and

WHEREAS, Chanthon Bun serves the community as Co-Executive Director at Asian Prisoner Support Committee. Born in Cambodia during the Khmer Rouge genocide, he and his family escaped to a refugee camp in Thailand, eventually being resettled in California as refugees when Chanthon was 6 years old; and

WHEREAS, Borey Ai (“Peejay”) serves the community as the Senior Community Advocate at Asian Prisoner Support Committee. Born in a refugee camp in Thailand, where his family fled to escape the Khmer Rouge genocide in Cambodia, Peejay and his family came to the U.S. as refugees when he was only 4-years-old; and

WHEREAS, Nghiep Lam serves the community as the Programs and Facilities Manager at Asian Prisoner Support Committee. Born in Hai Phong, Vietnam, at age 2, Nghiep and his parents fled Vietnam to escape the Vietnamese Communist Party. At the age of 4, Nghiep came to the United States with his parents and younger brother as a refugee, and resettled in the Bay Area; and

WHEREAS, Maria Legarda serves the community as the Reentry Navigator Consultant at Asian Prisoner Support Committee. Born and raised in a rural town in Manila, Philippines, life at home for Maria and her family was filled with emotional and financial challenges. Maria immigrated alone to the United States on a work visa at age 20; and

WHEREAS, due to decades old criminal convictions, the APSC4 continue to face the threat of deportation to countries they fled as children, despite their personal transformation and tireless community work, and have applied for clemency from Governor Newsom to protect them from deportation and to allow them to continue serving the community; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED: That the Oakland City Council urges Governor Gavin Newsom to use his clemency power to grant pardons protecting the APSC4, and other individuals facing deportation, as recognition that people can change their lives and make amends; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED: That the Oakland City Council directs the City Administrator to convey this resolution to the Office of the Governor.

IN COUNCIL, OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA,

PASSED BY THE FOLLOWING VOTE:

AYES - BROWN, FIFE, HOUSTON, KAPLAN, RAMACHANDRAN, UNGER, AND
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE GALLO

NOES –

ABSENT – COUNCIL PRESIDENT JENKINS (serving as Mayor pursuant to Charter Section 303)

ABSTENTION –

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

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