

December 18, 2009

A Resolution Recognizing the Human Rights and Human Dignity of Immigrants and Calling for the Cessation of Enforcement of Immigration Laws by Local Law Enforcement in Gwinnett County, Georgia

WHEREAS, on December 10, 1948, members of the United Nations signed the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and countries of different political, economic, and social systems agreed on the fundamental rights that all people share on the basis of their humanity, regardless of sex, race, religion, age, or immigration status; and

WHEREAS, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights encompasses a broad spectrum of economic, social, cultural, political, and civil rights, and declares that “recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world”; and

WHEREAS, President Obama vowed on December 10, 2008, the 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, “let us rededicate ourselves to the advancement of human rights and freedoms for all, and pledge always to live by the ideals we promote to the world”; and

WHEREAS, in year 2000, members of the General Assembly of the United Nations declared December 18th International Migrants Day in support of the rights of migrant workers and their families; and

WHEREAS, the United States has signed and ratified the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, and thereby has obliged itself to apply these international human rights treaties at the federal, state, and local levels; and

WHEREAS, the United States international human rights obligations mandate recognition and respect for the fundamental human rights of all people, irrespective of immigration status; and

WHEREAS, Concluding Observations of the U.N. Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination have called for specific reforms under the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination to combat racial profiling in the U.S, including the repeal of 287(g) agreements which delegate immigration enforcement authority to specific local police agencies; and

WHEREAS, delegation of immigration enforcement authority to local law enforcement has been shown to threaten public safety through generating fear and mistrust of law enforcement in immigrant communities; and

WHEREAS, furthermore, local enforcement of immigration laws leads to racial profiling and targeting of communities of color; and

WHEREAS, furthermore, local enforcement of immigration laws leads to the tearing apart of families, and the American citizens most profoundly harmed by such practices are the children left alone who will be forced either to grow up apart from their parents or be denied some of their country’s greatest promises; and

WHEREAS, the United States is a nation built by immigrants and thrives on their contributions to every aspect of American life; and

WHEREAS, Gwinnett County, Georgia is home to a diverse population, including students, working people, and retirees of various backgrounds, all of whom add to this county’s cultural richness and economic vitality.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that there shall be an immediate cessation of enforcement of immigration laws by local law enforcement in Gwinnett County, as such practices have a devastating impact on American families and law-abiding and hard working community members who deserve the rights afforded them by the virtue of their humanity and as reaffirmed by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the international human rights treaties ratified by the United States.