

RESOLUTION NO. 67,470–N.S.

CALLING FOR AN END TO THE UNITED STATES' ECONOMIC, COMMERCIAL, AND FINANCIAL EMBARGO AGAINST CUBA

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

WHEREAS, the U.S. embargo against Cuba continues to inflict hardship on the men, women, and children of Cuba by creating shortages of food, medicines, and financial and trade opportunities; and

WHEREAS, on December 17, 2014, U.S. President Barack Obama and Cuban President Raul Castro announced a new era of relations between the two countries and agreed to re-establish diplomatic relations; and

WHEREAS, Cuba and the United States re-opened their respective embassies in 2015; and

WHEREAS, despite the détente led by President Obama, the U.S. embargo continues to be in place; and

WHEREAS, the 1996 Helms Burton Act extended the territorial application of the initial embargo to apply to foreign companies trading with Cuba; and

WHEREAS, 191 countries voted at the United Nations General Assembly in October 2015 in favor of lifting the U.S. embargo against Cuba, with only two countries — the United States and Israel — opposed; and

WHEREAS, 72 percent of Americans are in favor of ending the embargo according to a July 2015 Pew Research Center Poll; and

WHEREAS, on December 26, 2001, Berkeley, California and Palma Soriano, Santiago de Cuba became official Sister-Cities; and

WHEREAS, since their sisterhood, Berkeley and Palma Soriano have continued to build upon our connection by fostering relationships between the citizens and institutions of our cities, and by working on projects in ecology, education, health care, arts, and culture; and

WHEREAS, in December 2012, Mayor of Berkeley Tom Bates visited Palma Soriano to extend the good-will between the two cities; and

WHEREAS, the embargo denies United States citizens access to Cuban medical technology such as the diabetes drug Heberpot-P, vaccines for meningitis B and hepatitis B, monoclonal antibodies for kidney transplants, as well as the only therapeutic vaccine in the world against advanced lung cancer, called CIMAVAX-EGF.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council of Berkeley, California, calls for an immediate end to the United States' economic, commercial, and financial embargo against Cuba.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Council of Berkeley, California supports the following Bills in Congress: 1) the Freedom to Travel to Cuba Act of 2015 (HR664), introduced by Rep. Mark Sanford (R-SC 1st) and Rep. James McGovern (D-MA 2nd), 2) The Cuba Trade Act of 2015 (HR3238), introduced by Rep. Tom Emmer (R-MN 6th) and Rep. Kathy Castor (D-FL 14th).

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Council of Berkeley, California supports the following Bills in the Senate: 1) The Freedom to Travel to Cuba Act of 2015 (S299), introduced by Senator Jeff Flake (R-AZ) and Senator Patrick Leahy (D-VT), language of which is identical to HR664, 2) The Freedom to Export to Cuba Act (S491), introduced by Senator Amy Klobuchar (D-MN), and strongly encourages Senators Barbara Boxer and Dianne Feinstein to join the list of co-sponsors of both bills.

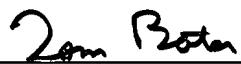
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Council of Berkeley, California requests the City Manager send copies of this resolution to Congresswoman Barbara Lee and Senators Barbara Boxer and Dianne Feinstein.

The foregoing Resolution was adopted by the Berkeley City Council on May 10, 2016 by the following vote:

Ayes: Anderson, Arreguin, Capitelli, Droste, Maio, Moore, Wengraf, Worthington and Bates.

Noes: None.

Absent: None.



Tom Bates, Mayor

Attest: 

Mark Numainville, City Clerk