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Approved as to Form and Legality

  
City Attorney's Office

## OAKLAND CITY COUNCIL

Resolution No. 86187 C.M.S.

INTRODUCED BY COUNCILMEMBERS REBECCA KAPLAN and ABEL GUILLEN

### **RESOLUTION URGING THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS TO END THE TRADE EMBARGO ON CUBA**

**WHEREAS**, in 1962, the United States government imposed an economic, commercial and financial embargo on Cuba; and

**WHEREAS**, on April 11, 2015, Presidents Barack Obama and Raúl Castro shook hands for the first time at the Summit of the Americas in Panama, signaling a shift in diplomatic relations since the two countries severed their ties decades ago; and

**WHEREAS**, in March 2016, President Obama was the first sitting U.S. President to visit the island of Cuba in over eighty years; and

**WHEREAS**, on July 20, 2015 diplomatic relations were officially restored between the U.S. and Cuba and a new era of relations between the two countries were re-established when both re-opened their respective embassies; and

**WHEREAS**, remittance and travel restrictions for U.S. citizens have been eased; and

**WHEREAS**, the embargo harms the citizens of Cuba who suffer as a result of the policy, not the government; and

**WHEREAS**, we are in the 21<sup>st</sup> century and the U.S. embargo against Cuba is a policy of the Cold War era that has not achieved its goal; and

**WHEREAS**, free trade, exchanges, travel, and business opportunities between the two nations would be a far more affective policy; and

**WHEREAS**, the embargo has inhibits the exchange of ideas, medicine, culture, the development of sports relations, investment opportunities; and

**WHEREAS**, Cuba is one of the world's developing countries, the embargo has had a tremendously crippling affect and has adversely impacted Cuba's development as a nation; and

**WHEREAS**, the embargo denies citizens of both Cuba and the United States access to each respective country's medical technology and advancements and denies the exchange of vital medicines and equipment that could lead to improved health for the people of both nations; and

**WHEREAS**, Cuba has been a friendly international neighbor by exporting and doctors and medicines to other developing nations to combat diseases like Ebola and other international epidemics plaguing some of the most impoverished nations on the planet; and

**WHEREAS**, Cuba poses no threat to the United States; 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**, the embargo continues to inflict hardship on the men, women and children of Cuba by creating shortages of food and medicines and impedes financial and trade opportunities with global partners; 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**, for 24 consecutive years, since 1992, the UN General Assembly has passed a resolution condemning the impacts of the embargo and proclaiming that the embargo is a violation of the United Nations Charter and contrary to international law; and

**WHEREAS**, many believe the embargo has a negative effect on the international opinion and the reputation of the U.S.; and

**WHEREAS**, many people of the United States and in the world believe this embargo is ineffective, inhumane and is in violation of U.S. laws and international conventions; and

**WHEREAS**, human rights groups including Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, and the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights have all been extremely critical of the embargo; and

**WHEREAS**, it has been estimated that the embargo has cost the U.S. over \$1 billion dollars in lost sales of commercial exports to the island and allows other countries to take in the market shares from the U.S. industry; and

**WHEREAS**, ending the embargo will create jobs in the U.S. and will create new economic opportunities with the export of technology, food, medicine, and other goods; and

**WHEREAS**, the embargo is antithetical to the American ideas of security, sovereignty, free trade and markets, and one of the countries most sacred documents, namely, the Declaration of Independence, which endows all men with certain unalienable rights to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness; now, therefore, be it

**RESOLVED:** That the City Council of Oakland, California, hereby urges the United States Congress to end the trade embargo on Cuba and officially supports H.R. 664: the Freedom to Travel to Cuba Act of 2015, H.R. 3238: the Cuba Trade Act of 2015, S.299 the Freedom to Travel to Cuba Act of 2015, and S.491 The Freedom to Export to Cuba Act.

IN COUNCIL, OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA,

**MAY 17 2016**

PASSED BY THE FOLLOWING VOTE:

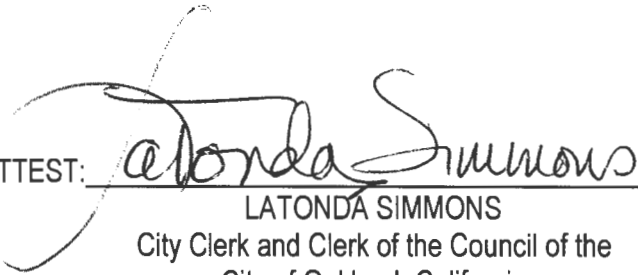
AYES - BROOKS, ~~CAMPBELL, WASHINGTON~~, GALLO, GUILLÉN, KALB, KAPLAN, REID AND PRESIDENT GIBSON MCELHANEY - 7

NOES - 0

ABSENT - 0

ABSTENTION - 0

Excused - Campbell  
Washington - 1

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