



Office of the City Clerk

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Legislation Text

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RESOLUTION CONDEMNING THREATENED RAIDS ON IMMIGRANT COMMUNITIES. THE DETENTION AT O'HARE AIRPORT OF THREE U.S. CITIZENS WHO WERE MINORS. AND ALL FEDERAL POLICIES THAT THREATEN THE WELL-BEING AND HEALTH OF LAW-ABIDING IMMIGRANT FAMILIES IN CHICAGO AND THROUGHOUT THIS NATION

WHEREAS, after the City of Chicago endured the threat of raids to arrest and displace undocumented families who reside here, it is incumbent on this august body to forcefully condemn the actions of the federal Immigration and Customs Enforcement agency (ICE) and to reaffirm unwavering commitment to Chapter 2 Section 173 of the Municipal Code of the City of Chicago, commonly known as the Welcoming City Ordinance; and

WHEREAS, on Thursday July 18, 2019, three female children, ages 9, 10, and 13, all of whom are United States citizens by birthright, were detained at O'Hare International Airport by U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) officials shortly after their arrival from Mexico for the apparent purpose of luring their undocumented parents to the airport and arresting them for deportation. As they were minors, U.S. Congresswoman Jan Schakowsky, who happened to be on the scene, raised the question of whether this incident might be legally considered as kidnapping. Additionally, many experts note that children can suffer psychological harm when detained or separated from their families by such an extraordinary action. Although the Welcoming City Ordinance does not currently apply here, it certainly violates its spirit; and

WHEREAS, Maria Ines Zamudio is an award-winning investigative reporter for local public radio station WBEZ. Recently, she interviewed more than a dozen veterans who were deported and are now stranded in Mexico, India, and Kenya. They all came to the U.S. as children with their families as legal permanent residents. When they became adults, they joined the military with the promise of expedited citizenship which was never kept even though they all saw active duty. Once they were discharged, they got in to legal trouble which is common for many veterans who saw action. However, unlike citizen veterans, legal permanent residents can be deported despite their service to this nation. They are now forced to live in a country where the language and customs are foreign to them, far from their families and without access to the mental and medical help many of them so desperately need; and

WHEREAS, one such individual Ms. Zamudio interviewed is a 74-year-old Vietnam-era veteran that was deported last year. He was arrested for a felony but the charges were subsequently dropped. However, deportation proceedings were initiated anyway. He tried to fight it until he ran out of money to pay the lawyers so he moved to Tijuana. Still, he doesn't understand why he was deported because he was only charged with a crime but never prosecuted; and

WHEREAS, the opaque, capricious and arbitrary immigration policies that have led to these situations must be challenged by all citizens of good will. In this nation of immigrants, such unconscionable conduct is inexcusable. The appointed and elected officials in charge of agencies such as ICE and CBP should be seeking to promulgate and promote ways to welcome rather than spurn and shun those who seek asylum, as did many of their own ancestors in the not too distant past, as well as those who just seek to continue living the only life they have ever known: now therefore

BE IT RESOLVED that we, the undersigned members of the City of Chicago City Council, gathered here this 24th Day of July, 2019 AD, demand that officials and agents of Immigration and Customs Enforcement cease threatening mass deportation of Chicago's immigrant families thereby creating great unease and extreme tension in Chicago's many diverse communities.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that suitable copies of this resolution be prepared and presented to the local officials of Immigration and Customs Enforcement and the U.S. Customs and Border Protection agency, as well as Acting Homeland Security Secretary Kevin McAleenan and Acting Homeland Security Deputy Secretary David Pekoske.

Alderman - 22nd Ward