

City of Philadelphia



Council of the City of Philadelphia
Office of the Chief Clerk
Room 402, City Hall
Philadelphia

(Resolution No. 130084)

RESOLUTION

Urging the 113th Congress to enact comprehensive immigration reform as outlined in this resolution that keeps families together, upholds our values as a nation, promotes economic growth, and creates a fair immigration system guided by respect for the human rights of all persons.

WHEREAS, The City of Philadelphia has long recognized the need for comprehensive federal immigration reform, having passed Resolution #100027 in 2010 and Resolution #060230 in 2006 in support of such reform; and

WHEREAS, The City of Philadelphia is a diverse city with immigrants from many parts of the world, who work, own homes, open businesses and contribute to the economic, social, and cultural well-being of the City; and

WHEREAS, Growth in Philadelphia's population and small businesses over recent decades has been significantly driven by immigrants, who bring new life and investment to our City's neighborhoods and commercial corridors; and

WHEREAS, Above all, we believe in the human dignity of all Philadelphia residents, regardless of immigration status; and

WHEREAS, The deficiencies of our country's immigration system have held back our economy, and fostered a sense of divisiveness and fear throughout immigrant communities in the City of Philadelphia and throughout America; and

WHEREAS, Countless people are lost in a federal immigration and detention system that has become fundamentally broken and plagued by abuse; and

WHEREAS, Record increases of deportations in recent years have tragically broken apart loving families, with over 800,000 people deported in just two years, many of them parents of United States citizen children, also causing thousands of those children to be pushed into the foster care system at risk of permanent legal separation from their parents; and

City of Philadelphia

RESOLUTION NO. 130084 continued

WHEREAS, In the absence of federal legislative action on immigration, state legislative proposals that are anti-immigrant and even unconstitutional have created a persistent distraction from other important matters of governance in Pennsylvania and many other states; and

WHEREAS, Immigration reform is an urgent federal responsibility, and must occur in a comprehensive, thoughtful manner guided by our nation's values of due process, civil and human rights, accountability and proportionality; and

WHEREAS, The City of Philadelphia recognizes that immigration reform must protect the right of all families to stay together, regardless of immigration status, family structure, sexual orientation, gender identity, or marital status, and provide sufficient family-based channels for migration in the future; and

WHEREAS, Comprehensive immigration reform must reduce the unreasonable wait times and arbitrary rules that keep families separated from their loved ones; and

WHEREAS, Comprehensive immigration reform must include a realistic pathway to citizenship for all hardworking, taxpaying, aspiring citizens who live in this country if they meet reasonable requirements; and

WHEREAS, Comprehensive immigration reform must provide a mechanism for young people who have grown up in this country to become citizens able to fully contribute to our shared future, and this mechanism must be equally available to those who are striving to achieve GEDs, vocational training, and alternative education in addition to completion of a high school diploma and higher education studies; and

WHEREAS, Comprehensive immigration reform and any new worker visa program must guarantee the same fundamental rights, obligations, and basic fairness for all workers, no matter where they come from; provide for strict compliance with applicable labor standards and wage and hour standards; ensure portability of visas so that workers can change jobs; and include the ability for workers to petition for permanent residency; and

WHEREAS, Comprehensive immigration reform must advance protections for individuals fleeing persecution, state and interpersonal violence and victims of trafficking or exploitation, while respecting their rights and autonomy; and

WHEREAS, The City of Philadelphia has recognized the harm caused by the costly mass incarceration of minority and immigrant communities, and believes that immigration reform must also reform federal laws and practices that have criminalized civil immigration violations; increased the use of indefinite immigration detention and contributed to the incarceration of Pennsylvania residents without due process; and expanded the definition of "Criminal Alien" to include young people; and

City of Philadelphia

RESOLUTION NO. 130084 continued

WHEREAS, The City of Philadelphia believes in redemption and second chances, and supports an end to the practice of retroactive deportation, based on prior criminal convictions, of community members who have already completed their sentences and have since improved their lives; and

WHEREAS, The City of Philadelphia understands that public safety depends on all residents reporting crimes to law enforcement, and maintains that immigration reform must seek to restore trust between immigrant communities and local police by reducing racial profiling and increasing transparency and accountability for the involvement of federal immigration authorities in local law enforcement; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That it hereby urges the 113th Congress to enact comprehensive immigration reform as outlined in this resolution that keeps families together, upholds our values as a nation, promotes economic growth, and creates a fair immigration system guided by respect for the human rights of all persons; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That a copy of this resolution shall be delivered to the United States Speaker of the House and President of the Senate, members of the Pennsylvania General Assembly, and the Governor of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

City of Philadelphia

RESOLUTION NO. 130084 continued

CERTIFICATION: This is a true and correct copy of the original Resolution, Adopted by the Council of the City of Philadelphia on the fourteenth of February, 2013.

Darrell L. Clarke
PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL

Michael A. Decker
CHIEF CLERK OF THE COUNCIL

Introduced by: Councilmembers Kenney and Quiñones Sánchez

Sponsored by: Councilmembers Kenney, Quiñones Sánchez, Goode, Greenlee, Tasco, Blackwell, Council President Clarke, Councilmembers Johnson, O'Brien, Oh, Squilla, Henon and Bass