



City of Philadelphia

City Council
Chief Clerk's Office
402 City Hall
Philadelphia, PA 19107

Legislation Text

File #: 100086, **Version:** 0

Calling on President Barack Obama to Extend for Eighteen Months Beyond March 31, 2010 the Deferred Enforced Departure Status of Liberian Immigrants Currently Residing in the United States.

WHEREAS, Many Liberian immigrants came to the U.S. to escape human rights abuses and the brutal armed conflict in their homeland; and

WHEREAS, Deferred Enforced Departure (DED) Status currently protects certain Liberians from deportation; and

WHEREAS, There are an estimated three-thousand six-hundred Liberians currently residing legally in the United States who will have to leave by March 31, 2010, if DED status is not extended; and

WHEREAS, The United States has a special historical relationship with the Liberian Nation established in 1822 by former slaves of the United States. The first eight presidents of Liberia were born in the U.S. and the national language of Liberia is English; and

WHEREAS, Liberia has been a strategic and military ally, particularly during the second world war when Liberia provided access to rubber and served as a transit point for U.S. troops; and

WHEREAS, Political unrest in Liberia between 1979 and 2003 forced hundreds of thousands of Liberians to flee to the United States because of violence and oppression; and

WHEREAS, Some two-hundred and seventy-thousand Liberians reside here legally with large Liberian communities located in Pennsylvania, California, Georgia, Illinois, Maryland, Minnesota, New York, New Jersey, Rhode Island and Oklahoma; and

WHEREAS, Liberian immigrants have painstakingly rebuilt their lives here, establishing families and businesses, and sending money back to family members in Liberia. Expiration of DED status threatens to tear apart families and possibly entire communities; and

WHEREAS, While the political situation in Liberia has improved, it is not yet capable of absorbing the 3600 Liberians who would be forced to leave the U.S. if the extension of DED status is not granted; now therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the Philadelphia City Council Calls on President Barack Obama to Extend by Eighteen Months Beyond March 31, 2010 the DED Status of the 3600 Liberians legally residing in the U.S. protected by that status; and

FURTHER RESOLVED, That a Copy of this Resolution be Sent to the President of the United States, the President and Secretary of the U.S. Senate and the Speaker and Clerk of the U.S. House of Representatives.