



City of Seattle Legislative Information Service

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Resolution Number: 30796

A RESOLUTION relating to development of an action plan to identify and address issues facing Seattle's immigrant refugee communities.

Status: Adopted

Date adopted by Full Council: September 26, 2005

Vote: 9-0

Date introduced/referred to committee: September 6, 2005

Committee: Housing, Human Services & Health

Sponsor: RASMUSSEN

Committee Recommendation:

Date of Committee Recommendation:

Committee Vote:

Index Terms: STATING-POLICY, CITIZENSHIP

Fiscal Note: (No fiscal note available at this time)

Text

A RESOLUTION relating to development of an action plan to identify and address issues facing Seattle's immigrant and refugee communities.

WHEREAS, the 2000 U.S. census reports that Seattle is home to nearly 100,000 foreign-born individuals from many countries; and

WHEREAS, the City of Seattle is committed to improving the lives of all its residents regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, age, sexual orientation, national origin or language;; and

WHEREAS, the City of Seattle through its various departments is providing millions of dollars in services and programs benefiting immigrants and refugees; and

WHEREAS, through resolution 30355, 27402 and 24913 the City of Seattle has welcomed refugees and immigrants to Seattle and has recognized their contributions to our City; and

WHEREAS, on May 26, 2005, the City Council hosted a forum and panel discussion on "The Changing Face of Seattle's Immigrant & Refugee Communities"; and

WHEREAS, more than 250 people attended the forum to learn about Seattle's demographic changes and how those changes could affect public policy, learn about the benefits to our community as a result of immigration, hear from panel members about issues and challenges facing local immigrant and refugee communities, and tell city officials about services and forms of assistance that are most needed for immigrant communities; and

WHEREAS, for many communities, the City's outreach efforts will be the first opportunity for positive interactions with government and may be an important test of whether they can trust government to protect promote and serve their interests effectively. NOW THEREFORE,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SEATTLE, THE MAYOR CONCURRING, THAT:

Section 1. The City should seek to improve services to immigrant and refugee communities. The City shall consider possible next steps that may include these and other options:

- * establishing a community advisory task force to advise the City on issues facing Seattle's growing immigrant and refugee populations;
- * a new immigrant and refugee service initiative;
- * efforts to improve the ways in which the City brings culture and language sensitivity to service delivery;
- * cross-departmental training on immigrant and refugee issues; educating city employees and providing public education on Ordinances 121063 and 121159 relating to the enforcement of federal immigration laws;
- * supporting the creation of linkages between immigrant and refugee populations and mainstream institutions;
- * supporting capacity building programs for community-based organizations (CBOs) serving immigrant and refugee populations;
- * supporting collaborative efforts between schools, police, and CBOs; encouraging civic engagement;

- * supporting voter registration and education programs;
- * establishing measurable goals;
- * implementing plans;
- * providing workforce support; and building English language capacity.

Section 2. To develop a baseline from which to evaluate possible next steps listed in Section 1 above and to develop other possibilities City staff should develop an inventory of current city services, identify potential service gaps, and gather other relevant information on what the city is currently doing to support refugees and immigrants. This information will be the basis of formulating a comprehensive action plan in the near term. Toward that end, the Office of Policy and Management (OPM) and the Department of Finance (DOF) are requested to do the following:

a) OPM: conduct an analysis of demographic trends in the City regarding foreign-born population growth since 1980, settlement patterns in Seattle compared to King County, English language proficiency, education attainment, poverty status, median household and family income, housing characteristics and housing cost burden, self-employment rates, etc.

b) OPM: consult with other jurisdictions and key immigrant and refugee experts on approaches to address immigrant and refugee issues (e.g., community advisory committees, executive orders, training, etc).

c) DOF: conduct an internal baseline assessment with all City line departments to identify programming and funding that are intended specifically to meet the needs and interests of immigrant and refugee communities, as well as identifying any non-targeted programs and services that are used extensively by immigrants and refugees.

d) DOF: conduct an analysis of how key departments (e.g., Parks, Libraries, Police, and City Light) accommodate the special language and cultural needs of immigrant and refugee communities in delivering their core business functions.

Section 3. The OPM and DOF are requested to report back to the Housing, Human Services and Health Committee by January 1, 2006 on their findings and to make recommendations on next steps that the City can take to better understand and address these issues.

Adopted by the City Council the ____ day of _____, 2005, and signed by me in open session in authentication of its adoption this ____ day of _____, 2005.

President _____of the City Council

THE MAYOR CONCURRING:

Gregory J. Nickels, Mayor

Filed by me this ____ day of _____, 2005.

City Clerk

(Seal)

TR/mf:gsr

Immigrant and Refugee Action Plan

8/3/05

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