



Legislation Text

File #: Res 31897, Version: 1

CITY OF SEATTLE

RESOLUTION _____

A RESOLUTION calling for an end to the U.S. government's economic, commercial, and financial embargo against Cuba.

WHEREAS, in 1960, the U.S. government imposed an economic, commercial, and financial embargo against Cuba; and

WHEREAS, the U.S. embargo against Cuba continues to inflict hardship on the men, women, and children of Cuba by creating shortages of food, medicine, and financial and trade opportunities; and

WHEREAS, on December 17, 2014, U.S. President Barack Obama and Cuban President Raul Castro announced a new era of relations between the two countries and agreed to reestablish diplomatic relations; and

WHEREAS, Cuba and the U.S. reopened their respective embassies in 2015; and

WHEREAS, despite some changes made by President Obama, the U.S. embargo continues to be in place; and

WHEREAS, the 1996 Helms-Burton Act extended the territorial application of the initial embargo to apply to foreign companies trading with Cuba, and the current U.S. administration has taken backward steps to harshen the embargo and return U.S.-Cuba relations to the era of the Cold War; and

WHEREAS, 189 countries voted at the United Nations General Assembly in November 2018 in favor of lifting the U.S. embargo against Cuba, with only two countries-the U.S. and Israel-opposing the resolution; and

WHEREAS, the majority of the people in the U.S. believe the embargo is ineffective, inhumane, and in violation of U.S. laws and international conventions; and

WHEREAS, in one year, the economic damage to Cuba mounted to \$ 4,321,200,000 dollars; and

WHEREAS, despite the lack of governmental diplomatic relations, organizations such as the Seattle-based U.S.

Women and Cuba Collaboration, organized by local labor and civil rights leader Cindy Domingo, and the Seattle-Cuba Friendship Committee, have been working on people-to-people diplomacy to create cross national learning opportunities rooted in the concepts of universal human rights, racial and economic justice, and women's rights; and

WHEREAS, the U.S. blockade inhibits the free travel of U.S. people to Cuba, and, therefore, hinders the ability to forge people-to-people ties between our residents; and

WHEREAS, 142,721 people traveled from the U.S. on cruise ships in the first four months of 2019, but as of June 5 no one is able to travel on these ships under the most popular "People to People" travel license; and

WHEREAS, despite the U.S. embargo, Cuba has achieved some of the highest literacy rates in the world (> 99 percent), guaranteed access to early learning, prenatal care, and long-term care resulting in life expectancy rates of more than 79 years, infant mortality rates as low as 0.4 percent, and better health outcomes than many Western countries, including the U.S.; and

WHEREAS, the embargo denies U.S. citizens access to Cuban medical technology such as the diabetes drug Heberprot-P, vaccines for meningitis B and hepatitis B, monoclonal antibodies for kidney transplants, as well as the only therapeutic vaccine in the world against advanced lung cancer, called CIMAVax-EGF; and

WHEREAS, 11 cities across the country have called for an end to the embargo; NOW, THEREFORE,

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

Section 1. The City Council calls for an immediate end to the U.S. government's economic, commercial, and financial embargo against Cuba, including restrictions on travel to Cuba by U.S. citizens.

Section 2. The City Council urges President Trump to renew engagement of negotiations with the

Cuban government as initiated by the policy of past administrations to build a new, cooperative relationship between the United States and Cuba; reestablish the full diplomatic staffing of the U.S. Embassy in Havana; and all full diplomatic staffing at the Cuban Embassy in Washington, D.C.

Section 3. The City Council urges Congress to pass legislation that would completely repeal the blockade and travel ban regarding Cuba, including the recently introduced H.R. 3960 and the Senate companion bipartisan bill that would end the Cuba travel ban.

Section 4. The City Council requests that the Office of Intergovernmental Relations deliver copies of this resolution, upon adoption, to President Trump, Senators Patty Murray and Maria Cantwell, and Representatives Pramila Jayapal and Adam Smith.

Adopted by the City Council the _____ day of _____, 2019, and signed by me in open session in authentication of its adoption this _____ day of _____, 2019.

President _____ of the City Council

Filed by me this _____ day of _____, 2019.

Monica Martinez Simmons, City Clerk

(Seal)