



Legislation Text

File #: Res 31745, Version: 1

CITY OF SEATTLE

RESOLUTION _____

A RESOLUTION proclaiming May Day, May 1, 2017 to be a day of action for worker, immigrant, and refugee rights; affirming that City employees may request unpaid leave for a day of conscience on May 1, 2017, and requesting that City Departments communicate to City employees the benefits conferred by state law for religious and conscientious leave for state and local government employees.

WHEREAS, on Monday May 1, 2017, local and national worker, immigrant, and refugee rights organizations and the May 1st Action Coalition have planned the “18th Annual May Day March for Workers and Immigrant Rights”; and

WHEREAS, on January 25, 2017, by *Executive Order: Border Security and Immigration Enforcement Improvements and Executive Order: Enhancing Public Safety in the Interior of the United States*, President Donald Trump declared the policy of the executive branch to secure the southern border of the United States through the immediate construction of a physical wall; to detain individuals apprehended on suspicion of violating Federal or State law, including Federal immigration law, pending further proceedings regarding those violations; to expedite determinations of apprehended individuals’ claims of eligibility to remain in the United States; to promptly remove individuals whose legal claims to remain in the United States are rejected; and by adding 15,000 law enforcement officers rather than invest that money into communities. President Trump and the billionaires who dominate his administration have made clear their intention to attack the rights of immigrants, refugees, women, LGBTQ people, people of color, the labor movement, and all workers; and

WHEREAS, contrary to attempts to sow division between US-born workers and immigrant workers, the interests of all workers, immigrant and native-born, are best served by solidarity and building a united

movement strong enough to win unionized living-wage jobs with decent living standards for all, and full civil rights for immigrants and refugees, consistent with the longstanding motto of the labor movement that, “an injury to one is an injury to all”; and

WHEREAS, immigrants and refugees contribute indispensably to the state and local economy, and without workers, foreign-born, undocumented, and native-born - Washington’s economy could not and would not function; and

WHEREAS, the May 1st Action Coalition issued a Declaration of General Strike on April 2, 2017 stating, “The May 1st Action Coalition is calling for a General Strike on May 1st, 2017 (International Workers’ Day). We are responding to a nationwide call for a strike on that day, as well as to many in our community who have asked for a strong response to attacks by the new administration on labor in general, and immigrant workers in particular,” and further requesting, “we are asking you to call the City Council, the Mayor’s Office, the County Council, the County Executive and our Governor to declare May 1st a holiday (as it is around the world), to ensure that government workers can join us!”; and

WHEREAS, the Martin Luther King County Labor Council passed a resolution on March 15, 2017, resolving that “the Martin Luther King County Labor Council urges its affiliates to consider all forms of action on May 1, 2017, whether striking, walking out, taking sick days, extended lunch hours, exercising rights of conscience, organizing demonstrations or teach-ins, or any other acts of collective expression that builds solidarity across communities”; and

WHEREAS, the over 340,000 members of the Service Employees International Union United Service Workers West and the Food Chain Workers Alliance in California are planning to go on strike on May 1, 2017; and

WHEREAS, the Seattle City Council recognizes that workers, immigrant and US-born, through their ability to carry out strike and nonviolent civil disobedience, have the power to defeat Trump’s attacks, because without workers’ mental and physical labor no business can make profits and none of the productive

forces of the world can be harnessed; and

WHEREAS, RCW 1.16.050(3) provides that public employees in Washington State have the legal right to request two days of faith or conscience, stating, “Employees of the state and its political subdivisions ... are entitled to two unpaid holidays per calendar year for a reason of faith or conscience or an organized activity conducted under the auspices of a religious denomination, church, or religious organization... unless the employee’s absence would impose an undue hardship on the employer or the employee is necessary to maintain public safety.”; and

WHEREAS, the state has defined the concept of undue hardship in WAC 82-56-020, which are attached to this resolution as Attachment A; and

WHEREAS, City of Seattle Personnel Rules have provisions that implement RCW 1.16.050(3), which are attached to this resolution as Attachment B; and

WHEREAS, the Coalition of City Unions has reported that their members, who are employees of the City of Seattle, have inquired how they can take May 1, 2017 off from work to participate in May Day activities with the confidence that they will face no retaliation; NOW, THEREFORE,

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

Section 1. The Seattle City Council proclaims May Day, May 1, 2017, to be a day of action for worker and immigrant rights.

Section 2. The Seattle City Council reaffirms that City employees have the benefits conferred by RCW 1.16.050 and City personnel rules described in the attachments. Recognizing that some City employees may wish to participate in May Day activities, the City Council also requests that all City departments communicate to City employees that they have the right to request a day off without pay as a matter of conscience to attend these activities, and that they should be informed about any administrative procedures required to make that request.

Adopted by the City Council the _____ day of _____, 2017, and signed by
me in open session in authentication of its adoption this _____ day of _____, 2017.

President _____ of the City Council

The Mayor concurred the _____ day of _____, 2017.

Edward B. Murray, Mayor

Filed by me this _____ day of _____, 2017.

Monica Martinez Simmons, City Clerk

(Seal)

Attachments:

Attachment A - WAC 82-56-020

Attachment B - Relevant Personnel Rules