



Legislation Text

File #: Res 31925, Version: 2

CITY OF SEATTLE

RESOLUTION _____

A RESOLUTION affirming The City of Seattle’s support for its local Iranian-American and Iranian-immigrant communities, recognizing the importance of people-to-people diplomacy at the local level, calling for a de-escalation in the conflict and damaging rhetoric between the U.S. and Iran and an end to the attacks on the democratic rights of people with Iranian heritage in Washington State and requesting the Office of Intergovernmental Relations communicate these positions to the Washington State congressional delegation.

WHEREAS, The City of Seattle values its ethnic, racial, linguistic, and socio-economic diversity, which is a source of strength in Seattle and beyond, and the City Council is committed to ensuring that all our residents can live and pursue their livelihoods in peace and prosperity; and

WHEREAS, The City of Seattle is committed to being an inclusive, welcoming city and advancing policies to protect vulnerable communities, while denouncing national and federal policies and rhetoric targeting immigrants and immigrant communities; and

WHEREAS, the Trump Administration’s policies toward Iran, including air strikes and the prominent drone assassination of Iranian Major General Qasem Soleimani in Iraq, are risking war, and have already resulted in retaliatory missile strikes on January 7, 2020; and

WHEREAS, ordinary people, especially women, young people, and marginalized communities, always pay the greatest price of war; and

WHEREAS, the United States wars in Afghanistan, beginning in 2001, and in Iraq beginning in 2003, have not expanded freedom, democracy, standards of living, or safety for ordinary people in the Middle East, nor increased the safety of people in the United States, and instead caused massive loss of human life and ongoing suffering in Afghanistan, Iraq, and among U.S. soldiers; and

WHEREAS, *The New York Times* reported that on January 4, 2020, Department of Homeland Security agents detained and questioned over 60 people of Iranian descent, the vast majority of whom are US citizens, at the Peace Arch Border Crossing in Blaine, Washington, including Seattle residents and families with small children; and

WHEREAS, Seattle resident Aram Falsafi, who is an Iranian American, reports being detained at the Seattle-Tacoma International Airport on January 5, 2020; and

WHEREAS, the Seattle City Council believes that it is unacceptable and contrary to Seattle's "welcoming city" policy for law enforcement to detain and question Seattle residents due to their ethnic or national heritage; and

WHEREAS, the Washington State chapter of the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) asserts that "all U.S. citizens, permanent residents, and visitors should be treated with dignity," and condemns "government discrimination against people based on heritage, race, country of origin, religion, or any other part of their identity because it contributes to a climate of hostility that disproportionately impacts the most marginalized"; and

WHEREAS, U.S. Representative Pramila Jayapal has announced that she is introducing legislation to enable people to have attorneys present during questioning by Border Patrol officers; and

WHEREAS, on January 5, 2020, the Iraqi Parliament voted unanimously to expel all U.S. military forces from Iraq, to which President Trump threatened, "If they do ask us to leave, if we don't do it in a very friendly basis, we will charge them sanctions like they've never seen before ever;" and

WHEREAS, on January 4, 2020, President Trump threatened on Twitter to strike targets, "important to Iran & the Iranian culture;" and

WHEREAS, the Geneva Conventions classify the targeting of cultural sites as a war crime; and

WHEREAS, U.S. Senator Bernie Sanders and U.S. Representative Ro Khanna introduced legislation, sponsored by Washington's Senator Maria Cantwell, to block President Trump from deploying any

funding for military action against Iran without the approval of Congress; and

WHEREAS, the U.S. House of Representatives on January 9, 2020, voted to approve a resolution aimed at

restraining the President's ability to use military action against Iran without congressional approval; and

WHEREAS, peace-loving people and global leaders alike are calling on national governments for de-escalation

in the conflict between the United States and Iran; and

WHEREAS, the Iranian American, Iranian immigrant, and Persian heritage communities in Seattle, like many

other communities, consists of inspiring residents who work every day to make our city a better place

for all and the City of Seattle appreciates the contributions of those communities to creating the kind of

city where people want to live, learn, work, and prosper; and

WHEREAS, the Seattle City Council is committed to maintaining community stakeholder engagement around

implementation of policies that preserve and protect our diverse and inclusive community and will work

with established community-based organizations to connect immigrant community members with City

government; and

WHEREAS, the Seattle City Council believes that what is needed instead of war with Iran is a mass anti-war

movement in the United States and globally in solidarity with those who are campaigning for

democratic rights and against poverty, corruption, and ethnic division all over the world; NOW,

THEREFORE,

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

Section 1. The Seattle City Council calls for de-escalation in the conflict between the United States and Iran by all parties, recognizing that many residents of Seattle and the greater Seattle region have close ties of family, love, and friendship with people in Iran and that peace-loving people around the world have no desire to see armed conflicts escalate in any location.

Section 2. The Seattle City Council opposes war with Iran. The Seattle City Council urges the United States Congress to support legislation to prevent further military escalation with Iran along with legislation to

defend the democratic rights of people at the border, and requests that the Office of Intergovernmental Relations communicate this position to the Washington State Congressional delegation.

Section 3. The Seattle City Council calls for an end to the targeting of Iranian Americans for detention and questioning at the Peace Arch Border Crossing in Blaine, Washington. The Seattle City Council calls on the Department of Homeland Security to respect the democratic civil rights of all, regardless of country of origin, and urges the Port of Seattle to remain steadfast in the implementation of the Welcoming Port Policy it adopted in May 2018 and publicly oppose these injustices. The Seattle City Council requests that the Office of Intergovernmental Relations communicate this position to the Washington State congressional delegation and to the Port Commission of the Port of Seattle.

Section 4. The Seattle City Council reaffirms the importance of promoting people-to-people diplomacy espoused by Sister Cities International and like-minded organizations, and frameworks that advocate for citizen diplomacy and city diplomacy to be fostered so as to build the foundations on which peace and stability between nations can grow and flourish.

Adopted by the City Council the _____ day of _____, 2020, and signed by me in open session in authentication of its adoption this _____ day of _____, 2020.

President _____ of the City Council

Filed by me this _____ day of _____, 2020.

Monica Martinez Simmons, City Clerk

(Seal)