



El Paso, Texas
The International City

JOHN F. COOK
MAYOR

June 10, 2010

The Honorable Gabrielle Giffords
U.S. House of Representatives
1728 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

By Facsimile: (202) 225-0378

Dear Congresswoman Giffords:

I am writing this letter to clarify the City of El Paso's position regarding Arizona's SB 1070. On May 4, 2010, the El Paso City Council unanimously passed the enclosed resolution in opposition to Arizona's SB 1070. El Paso's response to the Arizona law calls on federal elected officials to pass a comprehensive immigration reform bill and expresses our concerns with the possibility of law enforcement racially profiling people. We are not condoning or encouraging illegal immigration, only expressing a valid concern about an unintended consequence of asking local law enforcement to become immigration officers.

We understand that the local business community is the pillar to economic growth in every city and that boycotting Arizona businesses will not change the law. Boycotts will punish the wrong people and ultimately hurt employment and the economy in Arizona. The resolution only refrains the City of El Paso from sending City officials and employees to attend conferences in Arizona but does not call to boycott Arizona businesses.

By passing the Resolution regarding SB 1070, the El Paso City Council reaffirmed its position that the federal government needs to address our broken immigration system but still maintain the principles of our constitution.

Thank you for understanding the City of El Paso's position.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "John F. Cook".

John F. Cook
Mayor of El Paso

CITY CLERK DEPT.

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RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, U.S. immigration policy continues to be an intensely divisive issue; and

WHEREAS, the State of Arizona has recently passed an immigration law SB 1070 signed into law by Governor Jan Brewer on April 23, 2010; and

WHEREAS, SB 1070 has caused widespread concern among civil libertarian and humanitarian advocates; and

WHEREAS, Civil Rights Leaders, Elected Officials and Police Chiefs across the country are also expressing deep reservations regarding SB1070; and

WHEREAS, the City of El Paso is a home-rule city that is deeply committed to human rights, human dignity and social justice; and

WHEREAS, we believe that legitimate concerns exist with SB 1070 that could potentially jeopardize rational allocation of public safety resources and create a wedge between law enforcement and ethnic communities and lead to racial profiling; and

WHEREAS, having local law enforcement involved in immigration enforcement will force undocumented crime victims to suffer and prevent their access to justice; and

WHEREAS, the vast majority of Latin Americans and Mexican immigrants in the United States have come in search of better lives for their families and themselves; and

WHEREAS, it is cruel for immigrants to have to live in the underground of American society; and

WHEREAS, America has always been a land of opportunity for hardworking immigrants supported by the enduring principles of our Constitution;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF EL PASO:

1. That the City of El Paso calls upon our national leaders to agree upon comprehensive reform of immigration legislation which provides for a compassionate path to citizenship; and
2. That the City of El Paso believes in the dignity of work and advocates for humane treatment of working immigrants and calls upon President Barack Obama and the Honorable Congress of our great nation to courageously pursue Comprehensive Immigration Reform now; and
3. That the City of El Paso calls upon its citizens to stand together and find solutions for the greater good of all including those least able to defend themselves in the spirit of the great Abraham Lincoln, Martin Luther King, and Cesar Chavez; and
4. That the City of El Paso will refrain from sending City officials and employees to attend conferences in Arizona.