

RESOLUTION NO. 15-23

RESOLUTION OF THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF RICHMOND, CALIFORNIA, URGING THAT CUBA BE REMOVED FROM U.S. LIST OF STATE SPONSORS OF TERRORISM

WHEREAS, the City of Richmond, California, has a sister city relationship with the city of Regla, Cuba, established in 1999; and

WHEREAS, the Richmond-Regla Friendship Committee seeks to foster friendship with the people of Regla and Cuba through the exchange of mutually beneficial ideas, and sharing of cultural, educational and humanitarian resources; and

WHEREAS, Richmond has welcomed various groups from Cuba to Richmond and the Bay Area, and made two official Richmond delegation trips to Cuba – in 1999 and 2013; and

WHEREAS, former President Barack Obama began a process of normalizing relations with Cuba in 2015, including removing Cuba from the State Sponsors of Terrorism list after an exhaustive review by the U.S. State Department (Cuba does not satisfy any criteria for inclusion on this list); and

WHEREAS, in 2021, just days before he left office, then-President Trump put Cuba back on the State Sponsors of Terrorism list thus reversing former President Obama’s efforts to thaw relations with the island; and

WHEREAS, President Biden has the authority to remove Cuba from the State Sponsors of Terrorism list by executive order, and to recommit to the normalization of relations with Cuba begun by the Obama-Biden administration; and

WHEREAS, for the past 62 years, the United States has imposed an economic, commercial and financial embargo on Cuba that prevents most engagement and trade with the United States, and punishes other countries that engage with Cuba; and

WHEREAS, the consequence of this embargo continues to inflict daily hardships and deprivations on the Cuban people creating shortages of basic necessities like food and medicine, and severely restricting international financial and trade opportunities. It prevents Cuba from obtaining vital medical equipment and supplies, and even impedes humanitarian aid responses to catastrophic events like Hurricane Ian which devastated both Florida and Cuba, thus harming the Cuban people who President Biden’s administration claims to support; and

WHEREAS, the United Nations in 2017 estimated that this embargo had cost the Cuban economy \$130 billion, averaging more than \$2 billion each year; and

WHEREAS, the United Nations General Assembly voted to condemn the U.S. embargo against Cuba, for the 30th time, Nov. 3, 2022, with 185 of 193 nations decisively voting in favor, only the United States and Israel opposed; and

WHEREAS, the Trump administration imposed 243 new sanctions upon Cuba, including restrictions on Cuban Americans who send remittances to families and businesses in Cuba. These sanctions contribute to a mass migration of Cubans, creating U.S. border security concerns; and

WHEREAS, former President Trump’s arbitrary designation of Cuba to the list of State Sponsors of Terrorism has subjected them to further sanctions and international financial restrictions that limit the nation’s ability to carry out critical financial transactions, including those needed to advance efforts to combat the COVID pandemic and improve its economy; and

WHEREAS, in 2021, 117 members of the U.S. Congress called for the removal of Cuba from this list noting in a letter; “a policy of engagement with Cuba serves U.S. interests and those of the Cuban people,” and

WHEREAS, Many U.S. cities, counties, state legislatures, school boards, labor councils and other organizations have passed resolutions (see <https://nnoc.org/resolutions/>) that have addressed:

- Supporting an end to the U.S. embargo/blockade on Cuba, and
- Supporting the Saving Lives Campaign for scientific collaboration with Cuba regarding the Covid-19 pandemic.
- Urging that Cuba be removed from the U.S. List of State Sponsors of Terrorism

WHEREAS, Richmond has previously passed two such resolutions including 1) support for ending the U.S. embargo/blockade on Cuba, and 2) support of the Saving Lives Campaign for scientific collaboration with Cuba; and

WHEREAS, this resolution also urges that Cuba be removed from the U.S. list of State Sponsors of Terrorism; now.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council of Richmond, California, directs staff to send a copy of this resolution and a cover letter to President Biden (via Julie Chavez Rodriguez, Director of the White House Office of Intergovernmental Affairs) and to each of Richmond's federal representatives - Congressman John Garamendi, Senator Alex Padilla and Senator Dianne Feinstein - to strongly urge President Biden to call on the federal government to remove Cuba from the United States list of State Sponsors of Terrorism; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Council of Richmond, California, urges our congressional delegation to pass legislation that will eliminate those aspects of the embargo that have been codified into law; and remove all sanctions against Cuba by the United States. Allow the peoples of the United States and Cuba to travel and trade freely between the countries; and

Be It Finally RESOLVED that the City of Richmond will issue a press release, in conjunction with the Richmond-Regla Friendship Committee, regarding the details of this resolution to City of Richmond media contacts.

I certify that the foregoing resolution was passed and adopted by the City Council of the City of Richmond at a regular meeting thereof held Tuesday, February 21, 2023, by the following vote:

AYES: Councilmembers Bana, Jimenez, Robinson, Willis, Zepeda,
Vice Mayor McLaughlin, and Mayor Martinez.

NOES: None.

ABSTENTIONS: None.

ABSENT: None.

PAMELA CHRISTIAN
CLERK OF THE CITY OF RICHMOND
(SEAL)

Approved:

EDUARDO MARTINEZ
Mayor

Approved as to form:

DAVE ALESHIRE
City Attorney



State of California }
County of Contra Costa } : ss.
City of Richmond }

I certify that the foregoing is a true copy of **Resolution No. 15-23**, finally passed and adopted by the City Council of the City of Richmond at a regular meeting held on February 21, 2023.

Pamela Christian
Pamela Christian, Clerk of the City of Richmond