

Resolution in Support of Immigrants City of Somerville, Massachusetts

Whereas: The City of Somerville was founded upon the hopes, hard work and rich cultural traditions of immigrants, and is home to the third-highest proportion of immigrant residents among Massachusetts cities, with approximately one-third of current residents born outside of the United States; and

Whereas: The City of Somerville recognizes the importance of the many contributions made by immigrants to the social, religious, cultural and economic life of the city, and recognizes the dignity of all our immigrant residents; and

Whereas: In 1993, the City of Somerville enacted a Human Rights Ordinance to ensure that all persons in our city would be protected in the exercise of their human and civil rights, and that no person in our city would be unlawfully discriminated against on the basis of citizenship; and

Whereas: The City of Somerville in 2004 passed a resolution supporting the civil liberties of all of its diverse residents, including non-citizens, and affirming the value of the contributions made by such residents to the vitality and character of the city; and

Whereas: The City of Somerville is widely known as a “City of Hope” for newly arrived immigrants seeking opportunity, justice and a better life; and

Whereas: The City of Somerville believes that its success as a community depends on the confidence, cooperation, trust and mutual respect of all its residents, regardless of race, ethnicity, or national origin; and

Whereas: The City of Somerville believes that requiring local law enforcement to monitor the immigration status of our residents would erect unwanted and destructive barriers to building necessary trust and cooperation between the city and its residents; and

Whereas: The City of Somerville believes that such requirements to enforce national immigration regulations would cause some immigrant residents to be fearful of cooperating with local police officers and prevent them from reporting criminal activity; and

Whereas: The City of Somerville believes that no governmental action should break up family groups, even when a family includes children born in Somerville and parents born in a different country; and

Whereas: The City of Somerville believes that criminalizing U.S. citizens who work with and on behalf of immigrants, or criminalizing immigrants themselves, is not a viable long-term solution to the immigration issue; and

Whereas: The City of Somerville has played a leading role in the protection of immigrants’ rights and has consistently promoted tolerance and respect for all residents, including immigrants, United States citizens, and their families.

*Resolution in Support of Immigrants (cont.)
City of Somerville, Massachusetts*

THEREFORE BE IT

RESOLVED, that the City of Somerville hereby reaffirms its past resolutions and ordinances ensuring that all persons in our city shall be protected in the exercise of human and civil rights, and that no person in our city shall be unlawfully discriminated against on the basis of citizenship;

RESOLVED, that the City of Somerville reaffirms its long-standing policy that all immigrant residents possess the same basic rights and privileges as documented city residents, and that no resident shall be asked to provide immigration documentation as a condition for receiving any city services;


RESOLVED, that the City of Somerville opposes any efforts to transfer federal immigration enforcement responsibilities to state and local officials;

RESOLVED, that the City of Somerville reaffirms its policy that no municipal law enforcement resources shall be applied to the enforcement of civil immigration regulations unless otherwise required by court decision or statute;

RESOLVED, that the City of Somerville reaffirms its policy that municipal law enforcement personnel refrain from inquiring about the immigration status of any individual unless such inquiry is based on particularized suspicion of criminal activity; and

RESOLVED, that the City of Somerville hereby expresses its strong support for comprehensive immigration reform that combines a path to permanent status for immigrants already here with humane and effective enforcement of the security of our nation's borders.

ADOPTED this 1st day of May 2006


JOSEPH A. CURTATONE, MAYOR





