

OFFERED BY COUNCILOR KENDRA LARA



CITY OF BOSTON IN CITY COUNCIL

RESOLUTION CALLING FOR AN END TO THE U.S. EMBARGO AGAINST CUBA AND THE OPENING UP OF NEW TRAVEL AND COLLABORATIVE CULTURAL, MEDICAL, AND ACADEMIC OPPORTUNITIES BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES

WHEREAS, Since March 14, 1958, the United States has maintained the most enduring trade embargo against Cuba in our nation's history; *and*

WHEREAS, On December 17, 2014, U.S. President Barack Obama and former Cuban President Raul Castro executed an agreement to re-establish diplomatic relations and cooperation between the two countries on issues of mutual interest; *and*

WHEREAS, Despite executive decisions by President Obama easing some restrictive regulations, the central portions of the embargo affecting trade and travel continue in force; *and*

WHEREAS, Full restoration of trade and travel between the two countries would be of great benefit to both, particularly in the areas of economic opportunities, education, health care, tourism, the arts, music, and sports, along with medical and biotechnological research, especially in relationship to COVID-19; *and*

WHEREAS, Boston institutions have had many collaborations and exchanges with Cuba, including Massachusetts General Hospital, Boston Medical Center, Tufts Medical Center, Boston University, Harvard Medical School, the Harvard School of Public Health, and the Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences; *and*

WHEREAS, The City of Boston, the home of some of the leading medical, public health, and academic institutions in the United States, would greatly benefit from the restoration of trade with Cuba by permitting the scientific, biopharmaceutical, medical, and public collaboration, and exchange, including the importation of Cuban products useful to Boston such as life-saving medicines Herberprot-p and CIMAvax; *and*

WHEREAS, There is an ongoing national awareness and work towards similar Cuban collaborative efforts in over 30 other cities, states, and unions, including the City of Cambridge and Brookline, calling for the lifting of the embargo on Cuba and collaborating on scientific and medical research and exchange; **NOW,
THEREFORE BE IT**

RESOLVED: That the Boston City Council hereby finds that the embargo and travel restrictions are prejudicial to the interests of the citizens of this city, the United States, and Cuba as a violation of the rights of United States citizens and residents to travel to Cuba for educational research and cultural exchange; **AND BE IT FURTHER**

RESOLVED: That the City Council urge the immediate restoration of engagement with Cuba as initiated by President Barack Obama by promptly rescinding restrictive regulations and allowing the restoration of staffing to the Cuban embassy in Washington DC, as well as the U.S. embassy in Havana; **AND BE IT FURTHER**

RESOLVED: That the Boston City Council encourage local medical, health care, scientific, academic, and pharmaceutical institutions to actively explore collaboration with their Cuban counterparts in knowledge transfer and collaboration in public health prevention methods, innovation treatments, and the development of new treatments, vaccines, and protocols; **AND BE IT FURTHER**

RESOLVED: That the Boston City Council appeal to the Massachusetts State Legislature and the Governor to actively pursue such exchanges, knowledge transfers, and collaboration, including but not limited to efforts to further joint development of drugs and treatment protocols in pursuit of the COVID-19 virus and other infectious diseases; **AND BE IT FURTHER**

RESOLVED: That the Boston City Council and the Massachusetts State Legislature strongly urge the Massachusetts Representatives and Senators in the United States Congress to promulgate and pass legislation that will finally end the unsuccessful and harmful 59-year-old economic, financial, and commercial embargo, as well as the travel restrictions on U.S. citizens and residents to Cuba, and Cuban citizens to the United States.

Filed on: May 11, 2022