



Councilmember Ben Bartlett
District 3

CONSENT CALENDAR
March 14, 2017

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Councilmember Ben Bartlett & Mayor Jesse Arreguin

Subject: Denouncing Presidential Executive Order to Build a Border Wall and Urging the City of Berkeley to Divest from Companies Supporting or Participating in the Construction of a Border Wall

RECOMMENDATION

Adopt a Resolution denouncing the presidential executive order to build a wall along the U.S.-Mexico border and recommend that the City of Berkeley divest from any companies involved in the construction of a border wall.

BACKGROUND

On January 25, 2017 the President signed “Executive Order: Border Security and Immigration Enforcement Improvements,” attempting to authorize construction of a high security wall, patrolled by law enforcement to keep migrants from entering the U.S.¹

The City of Berkeley recognizes the harm and stigma such action causes Latino people in California and throughout the nation. We recognize that immigration has been a part of our country’s history since its founding and do not believe in demonizing people of Mexican and Latin American descent. Furthermore, the construction of a border wall would waste an enormous amount of taxpayer money, hurt the environment, contribute to climate change, divide ancestral native lands, disrupt tribal communities, increase international tensions, and reinforce failed Cold War policies of isolationism and exclusion.

Therefore, to ensure that we as a City do not contribute in any way to the construction of the wall; it is recommended that the City of Berkeley divest from all companies that are involved with or become involved with the construction of a border wall.

The City must examine the existing companies it does business with and find ways to disengage from companies found to be participating in the construction of a wall. The City must vet companies before entering into new contracts and ensure that it does not enter into new contracts with companies that are participating in the construction of a border wall.

¹ <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2017/jan/25/donald-trump-sign-mexico-border-executive-order>

Hatred and xenophobia have once more gained currency in our country. Therefore, it is our duty to uphold and promote values of inclusion shared prosperity.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

Minimal.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILTY:

No negative impact and consistent with City standards.

CONTACT PERSON:

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ATTACHMENT

1. Resolution

RESOLUTION NO. ~~##,###~~-N.S.

DENOUNCING THE BORDER WALL

WHEREAS, immigration has been a part of this country's history since its inception and this country has thrived as a result of the many achievements and contributions of said immigrants; and

WHEREAS, it is estimated that there are 2.4 million undocumented immigrants living in California and 11.4 million living in the United States total; and

WHEREAS, construction of a border wall with tightened security will harm refugees who are fleeing from life threatening situations in Central American countries including Honduras and El Salvador where gang violence is experiencing an epidemic; and

WHEREAS, undocumented immigrants contribute significantly to the economy in taxes estimated to be \$11.4 billion a year nationwide and \$3.1 billion in California alone; and

WHEREAS, the wall would increase tensions between the United States and Mexico, making it difficult to achieve cooperation on a wide variety of issues; and

WHEREAS, the wall would cause serious environmental damage by increasing emissions, cutting off natural water flows, and disturbing wildlife migration routes, all of which would contribute to climate change; and

WHEREAS, the wall would cut through ancestral native lands, interfere with native migratory traditions, divide native families, and significantly disrupt tribal communities and their day-to-day life; and

WHEREAS, the wall would be a huge financial burden to taxpayers with an estimated cost of at least \$25 billion dollars; and

WHEREAS, the United States has seen multiple waves of xenophobia and hate towards immigrants during its history, each being unjustified and damaging, with the border wall being the latest manifestation of that; and

WHEREAS, the wall would reinforce failed Cold War policies of isolationism and exclusion which caused enormous suffering and human misery; and

WHEREAS, Berkeley is a city which has championed inclusion of everyone regardless of nationality, ethnicity, gender, religion and sexual orientation and has been a Sanctuary City for many years.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Council of the City of Berkeley denounces the presidential executive order to construct a wall between the United States and Mexico and resolves to the best of its ability to divest from any companies involved in the construction of the wall.

