



Proclamation

RESOLUTION OF THE
CITY OF VIRGINIA BEACH
HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

A Resolution to Recognize the Need to Support Refugees

WHEREAS, the City of Virginia Beach Human Rights Commission recognizes the City of Virginia Beach's rich history and our indigenous heritage populations;

WHEREAS, the first immigrants to our nation landed on the shores of Virginia Beach in 1607, and immigrants from all over the world have settled here in the centuries that followed;

WHEREAS, many of the immigrants to present-day Virginia Beach, as well as other parts of the United States, were refugees;

WHEREAS, refugees are persons who cannot return to their countries of origin due to a well-founded fear of persecution on the basis of who they are or what they believe;

WHEREAS, there are currently an estimated 60 million refugees and displaced people in the world, more than any time since World War II, who are fleeing places including Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iraq, Sudan, Somalia, Nigeria, Eritrea, Myanmar, Ukraine, Central and South America (including Colombia and Venezuela), and especially Syria;

WHEREAS, as the descendants of immigrants, it is vital that we recognize the need for action to address the plight of these refugees by working to create a welcoming environment for refugees and asylum seekers and by treating all with dignity and respect;

WHEREAS, we also must speak up when others label asylum seekers or conflate them with terrorists, when in fact many refugees are victims of terror;

WHEREAS, we call for the international community to share responsibility with host countries, and we urge our national leaders to dramatically increase annual refugee admissions;

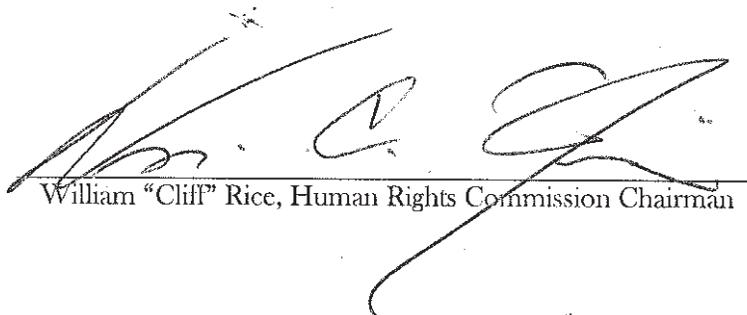
WHEREAS, we support strengthening the infrastructure of refugee-hosting communities to ensure that proper resources are allocated to provide services both to their citizens and to asylum seekers; and

WHEREAS, we urge the international community to significantly increase humanitarian aid funding to ensure that refugees' basic needs are met in countries of the first asylum.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF VIRGINIA BEACH, that refugees and asylum seekers are deserving of the same basic human rights enjoyed by the citizens of our great nation;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Human Rights Commission hereby urges government leaders at all levels, as well as our fellow citizens, to actively support these refugees in their quest for a welcoming and safe environment free of the violence that forced them to flee their countries of origin.

Approved by a unanimous vote of the Virginia Beach Human Rights Commission on November 12, 2015.



William "Cliff" Rice, Human Rights Commission Chairman