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Laura Russello for Liberty Bell Award
PROCLAMATION

Laura Russello for Liberty Bell Award
March 19, 2009

WHEREAS, Laura Russello is a community organizer in Ann Arbor, since 2008 as the Executive Director of "Peaceworks," a 501 (c) (3) organization, that produces various educational events with speakers, panel discussions, marches, and rallies, and distributes a weekly media newsletter to over 3,200 subscribers; and

WHEREAS, Laura Russello, prior to joining Peaceworks, has worked with homeless youth in Colorado, educated South African teenagers about HIV, was a policy specialist for Clean Water Action in Michigan, researched tobacco education outreach to youth and adults, and graduated from the University of Michigan School of Public Health with a Masters Degree in Public Health; and

WHEREAS, Laura Russello has directed projects to help high school and college students become effective advocates and involved citizens, including production of a documentary about racism in schools and an exchange project between Willow Run and Ann Arbor students; she has organized a civil liberties initiatives concerning immigrant rights and the wars in Iraq, Afghanistan and the Middle East; and she has collaborated with local artists on a "peace" mural and other multi-media projects; and

WHEREAS, Laura Russello's passionate advocacy with "Veterans for Peace," in organizing the Iraqi Water Project, to help the 2/3 of Iraqi citizens without access to clean water, earned the Project the unanimous endorsement of City Council on March 2, 2009; and

WHEREAS, Each year the Washtenaw County Bar Association honors one local non-lawyer with the Liberty Bell award, for outstanding service in one or more of the following areas:

1. Promoting a better understanding of our Constitution and Bill of Rights;
2. Encouraging greater respect for law and the courts;
3. Stimulating a deeper sense of individual responsibility so that citizens recognize their duties as well as their rights;
4. Contributing to the effective functioning of our institutions of government; and
5. Fostering a better understanding and appreciation of the rule of law.

WHEREAS, Laura Russello is a nominee for the 2009 Liberty Bell award, and already has nearly 200 supporters for this honor, including both lawyers and non-lawyers.

NOW THEREFORE, I, John Hieftje, Mayor of Ann Arbor, Michigan, in celebration of her wonderful contributions to the community, and in support of her candidacy for the 2009 Liberty Bell Award, do hereby proclaim a commemoration of Laura Russello on March 19, 2009, in the City of Ann Arbor.

I hereby set my hand and seal
This the 19th Day of March, 2009

John Hieftje, Mayor