



**LAWRENCE KESTENBAUM
COUNTY CLERK / REGISTER OF DEEDS**

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March 9, 2023

CITY CLERK JACQUELINE BEAUDRY
301 E. HURON ST.
ANN ARBOR MI 48109

Clerk Beaudry,

Enclosed for the attention of your city/township board/council is a resolution adopted by the Washtenaw County, Michigan Board of Commissioners on March 1, 2023 urging President Biden and the Congress of the United States to normalize trade and diplomatic relations with the Republic of Cuba by dissolving the current U.S. trade embargo, removing Cuba from the state sponsors of terrorism list and other barriers, and urging nearby cities, townships and village governments to pass similar legislation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "E. Golembiewski".

Edward R. Golembiewski

Chief Deputy Clerk/Register of Deeds

Washtenaw County, Michigan

A RESOLUTION TO URGE PRESIDENT BIDEN AND THE CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES TO NORMALIZE TRADE AND DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH THE REPUBLIC OF CUBA BY DISSOLVING THE CURRENT U.S. TRADE EMBARGO, REMOVING CUBA FROM THE STATE SPONORS OF TERRORISM LIST AND OTHER BARRIERS

WASHTENAW COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

March 1, 2023

WHEREAS, The United States established diplomatic relations with the Republic of Cuba in 1902, opening the first U.S. Embassy in Havana in 1923; and

WHEREAS, On February 3, 1962, The Kennedy administration imposed the U.S. embargo on Cuba; and

WHEREAS, the U.S. government has placed significant restrictions and prohibitions on American-Cuban relationships, particularly in trade, travel, and financial transactions; and

WHEREAS, for more than six decades, the United States has maintained a strict embargo against the Republic of Cuba through a comprehensive set of economic sanctions levied through various laws, regulations, and presidential orders; and

WHEREAS, The Republic of Cuba is currently home to more than 11 million people and the nation's proximity to the United States makes Cuba a logical partner for expanded U.S. trade and export of agricultural products; and

WHEREAS, the Republic of Cuba imported \$2 billion in agricultural products to feed the Cuban people in 2021, but only \$157 million worth of agricultural products were imported from the United States; and

WHEREAS, in 2022, the U.S. International Trade Commission estimated that American exports to Cuba could rise to \$1.8 billion annually if the embargo is dissolved, and improved access to U.S. producers could provide Cubans with more affordable food options; and

WHEREAS, after over 50 years of severed relations, diplomatic ties between the United States and Cuba were resumed and were officially established on July 20, 2015; and

WHEREAS, during the Trump Administration, the United States enacted 243 policy actions that negatively impacted Cuba, including placing Cuba on the State Sponsors of Terrorism (SSOT) list, thus reversing the Obama/Biden era policy of positive, diplomatic, engagement with Cuba; and

WHEREAS, the consequences of the embargo continue to inflict daily hardships and deprivations on the Cuban people, contributing to shortages of basic necessities like food and medicine, and severely restricting international financial trade opportunities. The embargo prevents Cuba from obtaining vital medical equipment and supplies, and impeded humanitarian aid responses during catastrophic events like Hurricane Ian, which devastated both Florida and Cuba, thus harming the Cuban people who President Biden's administration communicates a desire to support; and

WHEREAS, the on June 23, 2021, United Nations General Assembly voted to condemn the United States' embargo against Cuba, for the 29th time, with 184 of 191 nations decisively voting in favor; and

WHEREAS, Cuba's arbitrary designation on the SSOT list has subjected them to further sanctions and international financial restrictions that limit the nation's ability to carry out critical financial transactions, including those needed to combat the Covid-19 pandemic and improve the economy; and

WHEREAS, in 2021, 117 members of the U.S. Congress called for the removal of Cuba from the SSOT list, noting in a letter that , "... policy engagement with Cuba serves U.S. interests and those of the Cuban people"; and

WHEREAS, Michigan's agricultural sector, thus the agriculture industry in Washtenaw County, could benefit from greater access to Cuban consumers, and access to the Cuban market could mean new opportunities for Michigan growers to export dry beans, dairy products, fresh fruit, and other in-demand commodities and food products to Cuban consumers; and

WHEREAS, ending the more than half-century long trade embargo against the Republic of Cuba by relaxing the regulations and prohibitions on American exports and financial services to Cuba has the potential to boost the economies of both nations and could allow American farmers, ranchers, and food companies to efficiently contribute to the food security needs of the Cuban citizenry; and

WHEREAS, to that end, on February 8, 2023, Washtenaw County hosted the Cuban Ambassador to the United States, H.E. Lianys Torres Rivera; and

WHEREAS, Ambassador Torres Rivera and her retinue was greeted warmly by Washtenaw County officials and held discussions with county residents. The visit resulted in a positive cultural exchange and set the foundation for future engagement.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the Washtenaw County Board of Commissioners urges the Administration of President Biden and the United States Congress to dissolve the embargo and trade barriers against Cuba; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Board of Commissioners urges the Biden Administration to remove Cuba from the U.S.'s State Sponsors of Terrorism list; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Board of Commissioners urges the Biden Administration and Congress to expand diplomatic relations between the American and Cuban governments, allowing for freer travel, partnerships, and trade with the Republic of Cuba; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, no later than 30-days after the passage of this resolution, the Washtenaw County Clerk's office shall transmit copies of this resolution to the President and Vice-President of the United States, to the Speaker of the House of the Representatives, to the Majority Leader of the United States Senate, to each U.S. Senator and Representative from the State of Michigan currently serving in the Congress of the United States, and to nearby city, township and village governments urging that they pass a similar resolution.

COMMISSIONER	Y	N	A	COMMISSIONER	Y	N	A	COMMISSIONER	Y	N	A
Beeman	X			Maciejewski	X			Somerville	X		
Hodge	X			Rabhi	X						
LaBarre	X			Sanders	X						
Lyte	X			Scott	X						

CLERK/REGISTER'S CERTIFICATE - CERTIFIED COPY

ROLL CALL VOTE:

9 0 0

STATE OF MICHIGAN)

I, Lawrence Kestenbaum, Clerk/Register of said County of Washtenaw and Clerk of Circuit Court for said County, do hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and accurate copy of a resolution adopted by the Washtenaw County Board of Commissioners at a session held at the County Administration Building in the City of Ann Arbor, Michigan, on March 1st, 2023, as it appears of record in my office.

COUNTY OF WASHTENAW)^{SS}.

In Testimony Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed the seal of said Court at Ann Arbor, this 8th day of March 2023.

LAWRENCE KESTENBAUM, Clerk/Register

BY:



Deputy Clerk



Res. No. 23-030