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Proclamation Recognizing Torture Awareness Month June 15, 2009

Whereas, Documented incidents of torture that have happened by or on behalf of the United States government have been discovered; and

Whereas, Torture is illegal under the Geneva Conventions, the UN Convention Against Torture, Eighth Amendment to the United States Constitution; and

Whereas, Over 26,000 religious leaders and other people of faith and conscience have endorsed the National Religious Campaign's "Statement of Conscience" declaring, "Torture violates the basic dignity of the human person that all religions, in their highest ideals, hold dear. It degrades everyone involved -- policy-makers, perpetrators and victims. It contradicts our nation's "most cherished ideals"; and

Whereas, Thirty-eight retired military leaders, including two former Chairmen of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, have spoken publicly against torture saying, "If degradation, humiliation, physical and mental brutalization of prisoners is decriminalized or considered permissible . . . we will forfeit all credible objections should such barbaric practices be inflicted upon American prisoners"; and

Whereas, Citizens of Ann Arbor, MI, along with groups such as Michigan Peaceworks and the Interfaith Council for Peace and Justice, are participating in efforts to oppose torture, and strengthen U.S. laws barring torture.

THEREFORE, I, John Hieftje, Mayor of Ann Arbor, Michigan, do hereby stand against all forms of torture and inhuman treatment and proclaim June as Torture Awareness Month in the City of Ann Arbor. This month will recognize the struggles of those who fight against torture and attempt to help the victims of Torture.

I hereby set my hand and seal

This the 15th day of June, 2009

John Hieftje, Mayor