



Kriss Worthington

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CONSENT CALENDAR February 14, 2017

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council
From: Councilmember Kriss Worthington
Subject: Raising the Tibetan Flag in Solidarity with the Tibetan People for 58 Years In Exile and adopt a resolution supporting the "Tibet Action Year"

RECOMMENDATION:

Adopt a resolution urging China to respect Tibetan People's right to self-determination, safeguard their human rights and their pristine environment, and to resume dialogue with His Holiness and other Tibetan leaders. Additionally, to allow the Tibetan flag to be raised on the city flag pole on Friday March 10, 2017 to show solidarity with the people of Tibet.

BACKGROUND:

The year 2017 has been dedicated by the Tibetan community around the world as "Tibet Action Year" to remind about the ongoing plight of Tibet so that the just cause of Tibet is not forgotten. On July 2016, The New York Times reported that the Chinese government ordered largescale demolitions of monks' and nuns' homes at one of the world's largest monastic institutions, Larung Gar in eastern Tibet. Because of China's draconian policies, over 145 Tibetans have self-immolated to protest against it and call for the return of His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

The recent human rights abuses in Tibet are another example of the continued violent suppression the movement for democracy in Tibet. It is also one aspect of China's continued serious contravention of the Tibetan people's right to religious and cultural freedoms.

It is important that the City of Berkeley oppose the Chinese government's campaign of violent suppression and stand up for human rights and democracy in Tibet.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

None.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY:

Consistent with Berkeley's Environmental Sustainability Goals and no negative impact.

CONTACT PERSON

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RESOLUTION NO.

RESOLUTION URGING THE CHINESE GOVERNMENT TO END ITS VIOLENT SUPPRESSION OF PEACEFUL DEMONSTRATIONS IN TIBET

WHEREAS, Chinese officials have begun demolishing many of the monastic homes, most notably in Larung Gar, in the county of Sertar, in another attempt to shape and control Tibetan culture and religious life; and

WHEREAS, Larung Gar in Sertar has become increasingly prominent in both Tibet and China in recent years as a vital center for the study, practice and promotion of Buddhist teachings otherwise difficult to access or nonexistent in regular monasteries and nunneries due to restrictions put in place by the Chinese government; and

WHEREAS, several exile Tibetan groups have said local authorities distributed an order in June to reduce the number of monks and nuns by half to 5,000 where Government teams previously evicted thousands of monks in 2001, but the site has swelled significantly in the years since; and

WHEREAS, a recent travel ban on Tibetans visiting India for HH the Dalai Lama Kalachakra teaching, and harsh interrogation following their return, appears to be an example of contravention of Tibetan religious freedom; and

WHEREAS, Human Rights Watch issued a statement demanding that China suspend plans to demolish buildings at Larung Gar and over 145 Tibetans have self-immolated to protest against it and call for the return of His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Berkeley that it hereby urges the government of the People's Republic of China to respect Tibetan People's right to self-determination, safeguard their human rights; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that 2017 be dedicated as "Tibet Action Year" to remind about the ongoing plight of Tibet so that the just cause of Tibet is not forgotten; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Council urges the People's Republic of China to peacefully resolve the conflict in Tibet and respond positively to His Holiness the Dalai Lama's call for dialogue; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Council allow the Tibetan flag to be raised on the city flag pole on Tuesday March 10, 2016 to show solidarity with the people of Tibet and Tibetan support groups in commemoration of the Tibetan National Uprising Day.