



Commission on Labor

CONSENT CALENDAR  
May 30, 2017

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council  
 From: Commission on Labor  
 Submitted by: Libby Sayre, Chairperson, Commission on Labor  
 Subject: Supporting Freedom from Workplace Bullies Week

RECOMMENDATION

Adopt a Resolution:

1. Supporting a safe and trauma-free community and retroactively supporting the October 16, 2016 to October 22, 2016 Freedom from Workplace Bullies Week and encouraging all citizens to recognize this observance; and
2. Commending the California Healthy Workplace Advocates and the Workplace Bullying Institute for raising awareness of the impacts of, and solutions for, workplace bullying in the United States; and encourages all Berkeley citizens to recognize this observance.

FISCAL IMPACTS OF RECOMMENDATION

There is no fiscal impact based upon this resolution.

CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS

At their regular meeting on January 12, 2017, the Commission on Labor approved the following:

M/S/C (Frankel/Kessler) to approve retroactive support of the October 16, 2016 to October 22, 2016 Freedom from Workplace Bullying Week and authorize Commissioner Frankel to prepare and submit the report and resolution to City Council.

Ayes: Frankel, Kessler, Bloom

Noe: None

Absent: Fillingim

Leave of Absence: Sayre

The California Healthy Workplace Advocates and the Workplace Bullying Institute have been organizing to end workplace bullying. Their work has helped to bring more awareness to this issue, which is the first step in beginning to bring all bullying to an end. The well-being of citizens, employees and employers depends upon the existence

of a healthy and productive workforce in safe and abuse-free work environments, and exposure to work-place related stress has been linked to cause health consequences. Abusive work environments are costly for employers, with consequences including reduced productivity, absenteeism, turnover, and injuries. Protection from abusive work environments should apply to every worker regardless of race, sexual orientation, gender, national origin, age or disability.

#### BACKGROUND

The Commission on Labor has been interested in the issue of Workplace Bullying since 2006. On April 27, 2006, the Commission held a Special Meeting to address this very important issue that was becoming a hot topic at the time. Gary Namie, PhD, of the Workplace Bullying & Trauma Institute, facilitated a workshop on the subject of workplace bullying and 33 members of the public were present. More recently, in 2015-2016, 148 California Cities have passed Freedom from Workplace Bullying proclamations.

Many of us may remember a saying from a number of years ago. "Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words can never hurt me." Over the years we have come to realize that words can in fact be very hurtful, and that quite often bullying is accomplished through words, not just physical intimidation.

#### ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

While this resolution does not address our ecological environment, its goal is to help create and maintain a healthy emotional environment in our places of work.

#### RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

The Commission on Labor is charged with focusing on issues related to the private sector workforce here in Berkeley. Working to help create an emotionally healthy work place is clearly within the scope of the Commissions work.

#### ALTERNATIVE ACTIONS CONSIDERED

There were no alternative actions considered.

#### CITY MANAGER

The City Manager concurs with the content and recommendations of the Commission's Report.

#### CONTACT PERSON

Delfina Geiken, Secretary, Commission on Labor, (510) 981-7551

RESOLUTION NO. ##,###-N.S.

SUPPORTING FREEDOM FROM WORKPLACE BULLIES WEEK

WHEREAS, the City of Berkeley has an interest in promoting the social and economic well-being of its citizens, employees and employers; and

WHEREAS, the well-being of citizens, employees and employers depends upon the existence of a healthy and productive workforce in safe and abuse-free work environments; and

WHEREAS, exposure to work-place related stress has been linked to cause health consequences; and

WHEREAS, abusive work environments are costly for employers, with consequences including reduced productivity, absenteeism, turnover, and injuries; and

WHEREAS, protection from abusive work environments should apply to every worker regardless of race, sexual orientation, gender, national origin, age or disability.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Berkeley that the City of Berkeley hereby supports a safe and trauma-free community and retroactively supports the October 16, 2016 to October 22, 2016 Freedom from Workplace Bullies Week and encourages all citizens to recognize this observance; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Council of the City of Berkeley commends the California Healthy Workplace Advocates and the Workplace Bullying Institute for raising awareness of the impacts of, and solutions for, workplace bullying in the United States.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the City of Berkeley encourages all citizens to recognize this observance.

