



Cheryl Davila
Councilmember
District 2

CONSENT CALENDAR
November 27, 2018

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Councilmember Davila

Subject: Request from Bay Area Migrant Welcome Committee for City of Berkeley welcome and contributions to accompany these migrant asylum seekers to the US and specifically to the Bay Area.

RECOMMENDATION

Approve a resolution to approve the expenditure of an amount not to exceed \$150 per Councilmember, including \$150 from Councilmember Cheryl Davila, to the Bay Area Migrant Welcome Committee for funds to be delivered directly to those traveling as part of the caravan with funds relinquished to the City's general fund for this purpose from the discretionary Council Office Budgets of Councilmember Davila and any other Councilmembers who would like to contribute. The funds will support with food, shelter and basic necessities they are detained at ports of entry and those permitted travel to cities for immigration hearings, including the Bay Area.

FISCAL IMPACTS OF RECOMMENDATION

No General Fund impact; \$150 is available from Councilmember Cheryl Davila's Council Office Budget discretionary account (budget code 011-11-102-411-6).

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

None.

BACKGROUND

In support of Berkeley's Sanctuary City status, Berkeley should be in the lead of welcoming the caravan of migrants who departed from San Pedro Sula, Honduras on foot on October 12, 2018 citing persecution, violence and grinding poverty as motivating factors for their collective decision to embark on a courageous journey North. The caravan includes a large number of women, children and LGBTQ participants who are fleeing for their survival and safety.

This caravan has inspired others in Guatemala, El Salvador, and Mexico, fleeing similar situations, to join them thus strengthening their numbers and collective safety en route to the US- Mexico border. The caravan is now 6,000 strong, has departed Mexico City and is headed to various ports of entry along the California border, including San Ysidro and Otay Mesa. When they arrive they are likely to be detained and are without resources to support food, shelter and other basic necessities. Those permitted to enter will travel to various cities for immigration hearings, including the Bay Area. This includes 76 LGBTQ asylum seekers who arrived in Tijuana on November 11, 2018 and are seeking a hearing in the Bay Area.

In anticipation of the the arrival of these asylum seekers, the Trump Administration has radically altered US policy regarding asylum, thus shutting the door to legitimate asylum claims from people fleeing gang violence, extortion and persecution in their home countries. Against this callous act, the Bay Area Migrant Welcome Committee is joining hundreds of thousands of organizations, networks and communities organizing in solidarity with the caravan.

The Committee's work includes getting resources to those detained at the border and traveling to immigration hearings, arranging community housing for those awaiting hearings, organizing media and events to welcome caravan members to the Bay Area, and training those who host caravan participants so that they are aware of the impact of the trauma experienced as they provide support. The Committee includes many faith-based leaders, including Reverend Deborah Lee from the Interfaith Movement for Human Integrity.

CONTACT PERSON

Cheryl Davila, Councilmember, District 2 510.981.7120

ATTACHMENT:

1: Resolution

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

AUTHORIZING THE EXPENDITURE OF SURPLUS FUNDS FROM THE OFFICE EXPENSE ACCOUNTS OF THE MAYOR AND COUNCILMEMBERS FOR A GRANT TO PROVIDE PUBLIC SERVICES FOR A MUNICIPAL PUBLIC PURPOSE

WHEREAS, Councilmember Cheryl Davila has surplus funds in her office expenditure account (budget code 011-11-102-411-6); and

WHEREAS, a caravan of migrants departed San Pedro Sula, Honduras on foot on October 12, 2018 citing persecution, violence and grinding poverty as motivating factors for their collective decision to embark on a courageous journey North; and

WHEREAS, the Bay Area Migrant Welcome Committee work includes getting resources to those detained at the border and traveling to immigration hearings, arranging community housing for those awaiting hearings, organizing media and events to welcome caravan members to the Bay Area, and training those who host caravan participants so that they are aware of the impact of the trauma experienced as they provide support; and

WHEREAS, the caravan includes a large number of women, children and LGBTQ participants who have latched their hopes of survival and safety and seeking a better life to asylum; and

WHEREAS, this caravan has inspired others in Guatemala, El Salvador, and Mexico to join them thus strengthening their numbers and collective safety en route to the US-Mexico border; and

WHEREAS, the caravan, now 6,000 strong, has departed Mexico City and is headed to various ports of entry along the California border, including San Ysidro and Otay Mesa; and

WHEREAS, the Trump Administration, in anticipation of the arrival of these asylum seekers, has radically altered US policy regarding asylum by shutting the door to legitimate asylum claims from people fleeing gang violence, extortion and persecution in their home countries; and

WHEREAS, Berkeley was the first City to become a Sanctuary City, passing a resolution in 1971, and then in January 2017, as attacks on the undocumented immigrant community rose, reaffirmed its status as a sanctuary city.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Berkeley that funds relinquished by the Mayor and Councilmembers from their Council Office Budget up to \$150 per office shall be granted to the Bay Area Migrant Welcome Committee.

