



Councilmember Ben Bartlett
District 3

CONSENT CALENDAR
March 14, 2017

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Councilmember Ben Bartlett & Mayor Jesse Arreguin

Subject: Bridges Not Walls – Resolution denouncing the Presidential Executive Order to build a US-Mexico border wall; and directing the City of Berkeley to divest from all companies involved with designing, building, or financing any such wall.

RECOMMENDATION

Pass a Resolution to:

1. Denounce the Presidential Executive Order to build a wall along the US-Mexico border; and
2. Refer to the Peace & Justice Commission to identify (i) all companies involved with designing, building, or financing a border wall; and (ii) identifying any such companies that the City of Berkeley is doing business with, and (iii) make recommendations to the City Council on divesting from such companies.

BACKGROUND

On January 25th, the President signed “Executive Order: Border Security and Immigration Enforcement Improvements,” attempting to authorize construction of a high security wall, patrolled by law enforcement to keep migrants from entering the U.S.²

The City of Berkeley recognizes the harm and stigma such action causes Latino people in California and throughout the nation. We recognize that immigration has been a part of our country’s history since its founding and do not believe in demonizing people of Mexican and Latin American descent. Furthermore, the construction of a border wall would waste an enormous amount of taxpayer money; hurt the environment; contribute to climate change; divide ancestral native lands; disrupt tribal communities; increase international tensions; and reinforce failed Cold War policies of isolationism and exclusion.

² <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2017/jan/25/donald-trump-sign-mexico-border-executive-order>

Therefore, to ensure that we as a City do not contribute in any way to the construction of the wall; it is recommended that the City of Berkeley divest, as soon as practicable, from all companies that are involved with or become involved with the creation of a border wall.

The City must examine the existing companies it does business with and find ways to disengage from companies found to be participating in the construction of a wall. The City of Berkeley must ensure that it does not enter into new contracts with companies that are participating in the construction of a border wall.

It is our duty to uphold and promote values of inclusion and shared prosperity. Hatred and xenophobia must not gain further currency in our country.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

Minimal.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY:

No negative impact and consistent with City standards.

CONTACT PERSON:

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RESOLUTION
DENOUNCING THE PRESIDENTIAL EXECUTIVE ORDER
TO BUILD A US-MEXICO BORDER WALL AND DIRECTING THE
CITY OF BERKELEY TO DIVEST FROM ALL COMPANIES INVOLVED WITH
DESIGNING, BUILDING, OR FINANCING ANY SUCH WALL

WHEREAS, Immigration has been a part of this country's history since its inception and this country has thrived as a result of the many achievements and contributions of said immigrants; and,

WHEREAS, It is estimated that there are 2.4 million undocumented immigrants living in California and 11.4 million living in the United States total; and

WHEREAS, Construction of a border wall with tightened security will harm refugees who are fleeing from life threatening situations in Central American countries including Honduras and El Salvador where gang violence is experiencing an epidemic; and,

WHEREAS, Undocumented immigrants contribute significantly to the economy in taxes estimated to be \$11.4 billion a year nationwide and \$3.1 billion in California alone; and,

WHEREAS, The wall would increase tensions between the United States and Mexico, making it difficult to achieve cooperation on a wide variety of issues; and,

WHEREAS, The wall would cause serious environmental damage by increasing emissions, cutting off natural water flows, and disturbing wildlife migration routes, all of which would contribute to climate change; and,

WHEREAS, The wall would cut through ancestral native lands, interfere with native migratory traditions, divide native families, and significantly disrupt tribal communities and their day-to-day life; and,

WHEREAS, The wall violates a 47-year-old treaty with Mexico that dictates that no structure can interfere with the flow of cross-border waterways, such as the Rio Grande; and

WHEREAS, The wall would be a huge financial burden to taxpayers with an estimated cost of at least \$25 billion dollars; and,

WHEREAS, The United States has seen multiple waves of xenophobia and hate towards immigrants during its history, each being unjustified and damaging, with the border wall being the latest manifestation of that; and,

WHEREAS, The wall would reinforce failed Cold War policies of isolationism and exclusion which caused enormous suffering and human misery; and,

WHEREAS, Berkeley is a city which has championed inclusion of everyone regardless of nationality, ethnicity, gender, religion and sexual orientation and has been a Sanctuary City for many years; and,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Council of the City of Berkeley denounces the Presidential Executive Order to construct a wall between the United States and Mexico; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Council of the City of Berkeley refers to the Peace & Justice Commission to identify (i) all companies involved with designing, building, or financing the border wall; and (ii) identifying any such companies that the City of Berkeley is doing business with and, (iii) make recommendations to the City Council on divesting from such companies; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Council of the City of Berkeley expresses its intent to divest, as soon as practicable, from any companies involved with designing, building, or financing the border wall.