

*The Board of Supervisors of
Contra Costa County, California*

In the matter of:

Resolution No. 2018/245

Designating Contra Costa County as a "Welcoming County" to refugees and immigrants.

WHEREAS, Contra Costa County is committed to being a Welcoming County for refugees and immigrants; and

WHEREAS, Contra Costa County has a long history of welcoming newcomer refugees and immigrants, including refugees from Southeast Asia in the late 1970s – early 1980s; and

WHEREAS, a collaborative of community, non-profit, agency, and other stakeholders are established East Bay Refugee Forum as a multi-sector initiative to create a vision and strategy for expanding opportunities for New Americans and all other residents, and supporting the leadership, visibility, and voices of diverse immigrant and refugee communities; and

WHEREAS, the building of a welcoming community is fundamental to a vibrant and inclusive Contra Costa County, assuring immigrants, refugees, and other newcomers opportunities for economic security, empowerment, civic engagement, safety and freedom from discrimination, oppression and violence; and

WHEREAS, a welcoming community addresses language and cultural access barriers to services and participation in civic life, promotes coordination of services and resources for immigrants and refugees across all systems, champions cultural competency and understanding, and strengthens accountability to maintain the highest quality of services for immigrant and refugee communities; and

WHEREAS, according to PolicyLink and the University of Southern California's Program for Environment and Regional Equity, *An Equity Profile of the San Francisco Bay Area Region*, 2015, Bay Area communities are the most equitable when all residents are fully able to participate in the region's economic vitality, contribute to the region's readiness for the future, and connect to the region's assets and resources; and

WHEREAS, addressing quality of life issues, including access to housing, quality health and legal resources, gentrification, healthy and safe communities, living wages, economic stability, and safety from discrimination and exploitation, requires immigrant and refugee communities to building partnerships across all communities, thereby improving quality of life for all county residents; and

WHEREAS, according to the US Census, Contra Costa County is home to foreign-born residents comprising over 24% of the County's total population including a large number of undocumented immigrants; and

WHEREAS, immigrants, refugees, and other newcomers add significantly to the vitality of the state and national economies, with foreign-born workers representing close to 17 percent of the current U.S. labor force, and over 33.4 percent of business owners in California according to the Institute for Local Government, and will account for over

85 percent of the net growth in the U.S. labor force over the next 20 years; and

WHEREAS, June 20th, has been designated World Refugee Day since 2001 by the United Nations General Assembly, is dedicated to raising awareness of the situation of refugees throughout the world; and

WHEREAS, each year on June 20 the United Nations, United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR) and countless civic groups around the world host World Refugee Day events in order to draw the public's attention to the millions of refugees and Internally displaced persons worldwide who have been forced to flee their homes due to war, conflict and persecution; and

WHEREAS, the current political environment is marked by anti-immigrant, anti-refugee, and Islamophobic rhetoric, requiring of all residents' greater awareness, understanding, and dialogue; and

WHEREAS, President Obama, through the Building Welcoming Communities Campaign of the White House Task Force on New Americans, called upon local communities to endorse a set of principles to build inclusive, welcoming communities that allow all residents to thrive and advance civic, economic, and social integration; and

WHEREAS, the current administration is actively pursuing anti-immigrant, anti-refugee, Islamophobic policies and Executive Orders corrosive to welcoming values, creating fear and sowing distrust amongst neighboring communities, preventing immigrants and refugees from contributing their skills and abilities to American society, inhibiting their civic, economic and social integration; and

WHEREAS, Contra Costa County aspires to be a model for inclusion and equity for all populations, including immigrants, refugees, and other newcomers, through its commitments to support the ongoing inclusion and long-term economic and social integration of newcomers, demonstrate values of unity and understanding, by implementing policies and practices that encourage positive interactions between new and longer-term Americans remain positive ones; and

WHEREAS, East Bay Refugee Forum is organizing a campaign for Contra Costa County and Bay Area cities and counties to become welcoming communities for immigrants and refugees, and develop policies, programs, and systems to fully address the issues and needs of foreign born residents.

Now, Therefore, Be It Resolved that Contra Costa County recognizes June 20th as World Refugee Day and affirms that Contra Costa County is a Welcoming County to promote the value among all residents of advancing efforts for integrating immigrant and refugee communities, recognizing that a community is strongest when everyone feels welcomed, and brings immigrants, refugees, and the broader community together to develop policies, programs, and initiatives that build welcoming communities and provide all residents with the knowledge and tools to thrive and fully participate in their communities.

KAREN MITCHOFF
Chair, District IV Supervisor

JOHN GIOIA

CANDACE ANDERSEN

District I Supervisor

District II Supervisor

DIANE BURGIS
District III Supervisor

FEDERAL D. GLOVER
District V Supervisor

I hereby certify that this is a true and correct copy of an
action taken
and entered on the minutes of the Board of Supervisors on
the date
shown.

ATTESTED: June 26, 2018

David J. Twa,

By: _____, Deputy