



Legislation Text

File #: 13-0755, **Version:** 1

Recommendation to request City Attorney to prepare a resolution condemning the discriminatory laws against the LGBT community in Russia and strongly urge our sister city of Sochi to join our protest; ask the Long Beach/Sochi Sister City Association to work with the Human Relations Commission and the Center Long Beach to begin a dialogue on next steps to address these human rights violations.

Russia recently passed discriminatory laws against the LGBT community by prohibiting "propaganda of nontraditional sexual relations." Individuals in Russia are now prohibited from behavior such as advocating for LGBT rights or publicly demonstrating affection with gay or lesbian partners. These laws are patently unjust and violate the natural rights of freedom of expression and equality for individuals regardless of sexual orientation.

Long Beach is the only city in America to be sister cities with Sochi. Sochi will be the home to the 2014 Winter Olympics, and thus will be drawing worldwide attention as well as welcoming visitors from many nations. During the Olympics, athletes and tourists will be subject to the same odious laws that apply to Russians. Specifically, these laws allow government officials to arrest and detain "pro-gay" foreigners for up to 14 days before being fined and deported from Russia. Thus, these laws not only oppress Russians, but also Long Beach residents or other travelers who have the temerity to hug or hold hands with a loved one while visiting Russia.

Long Beach should protest these unjust laws and inform the residents of Sochi that the world disapproves of Russia's violation of human rights. Therefore, it is requested that we pass a resolution expressing our protest of these laws and that we send this resolution to the municipal government of Sochi, requesting that they join our protest. Additionally, we should request the Long Beach/Sochi Sister City Association work in conjunction with the City's Human Relations Commission and The Center Long Beach to begin a dialogue, utilizing our sister city relationship, on how to address the human rights violations resulting from the discriminatory laws that exist in Russia.

This item has no significant fiscal impact.

Approve recommendation.

COUNCILMEMBER JAMES JOHNSON
SEVENTH DISTRICT

VICE MAYOR ROBERT GARCIA
FIRST DISTRICT

COUNCILWOMAN GERRIE SCHIPSKE
FIFTH DISTRICT