

2020 Census

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Rue Landau
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Gwendolyn Wiggins
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WHEREAS, Article 1, Section 2 of the United States Constitution requires an actual enumeration of all persons residing in the country every ten years; and

WHEREAS, the results of the decennial census are used to determine apportionment of seats in the U.S. House of Representatives between the states as well as disbursement of over \$600 Billion in federal program payments; and

WHEREAS, the current Administration plans to conduct a largely digital census despite failing to account for the effects of a digital census on the undercounting of communities of color, lack of testing, and questions around cyber security; and

WHEREAS, the Census Bureau has been without a permanent director since June 2017 to oversee the operations of the Bureau and preparations for the 2020 Census; and

WHEREAS, the Census Bureau has been underfunded since at least 2012 and such underfunding has caused the cancellation of necessary pre-testing of the questions, systems, and other aspects of the Census, and

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that IAOHRA calls on the United States Government and each State and Territory of the United States to deploy all resources necessary to ensure an accurate count in the 2020 Census and to eliminate the undercounting of communities of color; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that IAOHRA will continue to use its resources to inform and prepare our members and our communities regarding the importance of census participation, and to equip them to advocate for appropriate funding and leadership within the Census Bureau for a Complete Count in the 2020 Census.



Robin Toma, President IAOHRA

Abolish Private Prisons

Robin S. Toma
President
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WHEREAS, a principal objective of IAOHRA is to enhance human rights practices under the law; and

Alisa Warren
First Vice President
St. Louis, MO

WHEREAS, the private prison industry profits off of the incarceration and labor of citizens; and

Carol Johnson
Second Vice President
Little Rock, AR

WHEREAS, private prisons treat incarcerated citizens as cash-cow stock rather than human beings with inherent, inalienable dignity; and

Beverly Watts
Secretary
Nashville, TN

WHEREAS, private prisons exploit prison labor for pennies on the dollar; and

Angela Rush
Treasurer
Fort Worth, TX

WHEREAS, the private prison industry outsources jobs from the public into their prisons; and

Jean Kelleher
Immediate Past President
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WHEREAS, statistics from the U.S. Department of Justice indicate that, as of 2013, there were 133,000 state and federal prisoners housed in privately-owned prisons in the United States of America; and

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WHEREAS, the private prison industry serves to undermine the U.S. Constitution, corrupting the Legislative and Judicial branches such that these branches can no longer serve their roles; and

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WHEREAS, private prisons receive up to 40% federally compensated wage tax breaks, shifting the burdens to the citizens while the prison companies profit; and

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WHEREAS, data on private prison conditions show an increase in overall prison violence, including violence between inmates and assaults against correctional staff.

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THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that IAOHRA supports the abolition of private prisons.

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Robin Toma, President IAOHRA

Condemnation of Conditions at U.S. Immigration Detention Centers

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WHEREAS, the United States is a nation of immigrants, and has historically served as a refuge for those seeking freedom from persecution abroad.

WHEREAS, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security has detained migrants, including young children, at immigration detention centers at the Southern Border, and around the country, in inhumane, unsanitary, and inhabitable conditions, and separated children from their parents, not all of whom have been reunified.¹

Whereas news reports describe conditions of extreme overcrowding, of 900 detainees being held in a facility designed for 125 people in El Paso, of children as young as eight years-old being forced to take care of infants, of detained toddlers without diapers, babies kept in freezing conditions wearing only diapers and t-shirts, children wearing clothing stained with vomit or breast milk, children and adults sleeping on concrete floors, and of detainees being denied soap and toothpaste.¹

WHEREAS, news reports describe detainees being denied adequate medical care, fed expired food, suffering from malnutrition and dehydration, being unable to lie down to sleep because of overcrowding and temperatures reaching over 80 degrees, being forced to wear soiled clothing for days and weeks because of a lack of showers, and being subject to outbreaks of flu, chickenpox, and scabies.¹ **WHEREAS**, guards wear face masks because of the strong odor at some detention centers due to the poor conditions.¹

WHEREAS, detainees have described a culture of systemic racial, gender, and xenophobic harassment and abuse to U.S. Congressmembers who have visited these centers, including female detainees who describe being called “wh*res” by guards,

¹ Lara Korte, “A judge ordered the end of migrant family separations last year. But a report says 30 kids remain in custody without their parents,” (July 13, 2019), The Texas Tribune, <https://www.texastribune.org/2019/07/13/immigrant-families-separated-kids-custody-despite-end-zero-tolerance/>.

² Adam Serwer, “A Crime By Any Name,” (July 3, 2019), The Atlantic, <https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2019/07/border-facilities/593239/>; see generally Simon Romero, “Don’t Talk to Her: We Toured the Troubled Border Station Housing Migrant Children,” (June 16, 2019), <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/06/26/us/migrant-children-border-clint-texas.html>.

³ Bobby Blanchard, “Photos show almost 400 migrants packed in cages at Texas processing center,” (July 12, 2019), The Texas Tribune, <https://www.texastribune.org/2019/07/12/mcallen-texas-migrant-processing-center-packed-migrants-photos-show/>.

⁴ Bobby Blanchard, “Photos show almost 400 migrants packed in cages at Texas processing center,” (July 12, 2019), The Texas Tribune, <https://www.texastribune.org/2019/07/12/mcallen-texas-migrant-processing-center-packed-migrants-photos-show/>.

Condemnation of Conditions at U.S. Immigration Detention Centers

being woken up at all hours for no reason, and being told by CBP officers to drink out of toilets when they are thirsty.¹

WHEREAS, at least seven children have died in U.S. custody in 2019 alone, compared to none in the last 10 years.² **WHEREAS**, at least 24 migrants have died in ICE custody between 2016 and 2018.³

WHEREAS, IAOHRA members issued a joint statement in July 2019 condemning the conditions of immigrant detention, specifically the conditions of detention of children, pregnant immigrants, and immigrants with disabilities and other medical needs, and the separation of families, which violate basic human rights precepts that all people be treated with dignity and respect, including the right to be free from discrimination on the basis of national origin and ethnicity.

WHEREAS, we strongly condemn the conditions at the detention centers and call out for federal immigration authorities to immediately improve the health, sanitation, well-being, and safety of detainees, and to promptly release detainees into the custody of family members or other guardians while they await immigration court proceedings.

WHEREAS, we call on human rights officials, federal, state, and local agencies to join us in our demand to end these deplorable conditions of detention immediately, which endanger the health, safety, welfare, and human rights of those held in detention, and their families and communities.

Therefore, it is affirmed that IAOHRA members stand firmly against the policy of detaining migrants at inhumane and inhabitable detention centers at the Southern Border and around the United States, and demand the immediate closure of these facilities.



Robin Toma, President IAOHRA

⁵ Sarah Ruiz-Gorman, “Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez: Migrant Women Told To Drink Out Of Toilets At CBP Facility,” (July 3, 2019), The Huffington Post, https://www.huffpost.com/entry/ocasio-cortez-democrats-migrant-detention-texas_n_5d1a5f9de4b03d61164025ce.

⁶ Nicole Acevedo, “Why Are Migrant Children Dying in U.S. Custody?” (May 19, 2019), NBC News, <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/latino/why-are-migrant-children-dying-u-s-custody-n1010316>.

⁷ Hannah Rapple and Lisa Riordan Seville, “24 immigrants have died in ICE custody during the Trump administration,” (June 9, 2019), NBC News, <https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/immigration/24-immigrants-have-died-ice-custody-during-trump-administration-n1015291>.

Condemnation of Islamophobia

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WHEREAS, some of the main goals of IAOHRA are to foster human and intergroup relations and promote civil and human rights around the world. This cannot be achieved when Islamophobia is a persistent issue, both within the U.S. government itself and amongst U.S. citizens; and

WHEREAS, Islamophobia is the fear, hatred of, or prejudice against Muslims or persons of the Islamic religion, especially when seen as a geopolitical force or the source of terrorism; and

WHEREAS, Islamophobia and anti-Muslim sentiments have resulted in the targeting, harassment, vilification, torture, and death of many black and brown people of the Muslim faith; and

WHEREAS, anti-Muslim acts, such as vandalism, desecration of mosques, and acts of violence against persons throughout the United States have increased over the last decade. There have been over 763 reported anti-Muslim incidents that have occurred since 2011; and

WHEREAS, U.S. Representative Ilhan Omar is the first, and only hijab-wearing, Muslim Congresswoman in the history of the United States. Within her first few months serving in the U.S. Congress, Congresswoman Ilhan Omar has been targeted and vilified by the White House, members of Congress, the media and government officials. An anti-Muslim display was erected in the Charleston, West Virginia capitol rotunda, aimed at Congresswoman Omar. Congresswoman Omar was placed on a white supremacist hit list after she was elected; and

WHEREAS, countless Muslim Americans, have been the victims of Islamophobic attacks and death threats. Here are just a few, all happening in the span of a single month in 2015. A pregnant Muslim woman was attacked in California on the evening of November 13, 2015, the same night of the Paris terrorist attacks, where three suicide bombers stood outside a crowded football stadium during a game in Saint-Denis, France. On November 17, 2015, four Muslim passengers were removed from a Spirit airplane at BWI airport after a passenger expressed fear after one of the Muslim passengers looked at his cell phone before take-off. On November 19, 2015 in New York, three boys attacked a 6th grade Muslim girl for wearing a hijab, calling her "ISIS." On November 20, 2015 at Philadelphia airport, two Palestinians were detained and questioned before boarding a Southwest flight for speaking Arabic; and

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that IAOHRA calls upon the White House to refrain from propagation of intolerance, vitriol, divisiveness and Islamophobia, and to launch a White House Leadership Conference to address Islamophobia, cultural diversity, and the importance of encouraging human and intergroup relations.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that IAOHRA appeals to the United States Congress to show leadership by example in condemnation of any and all Islamophobic/anti-Muslim rhetoric within its own establishment, as well as to actively initiate efforts to safeguard the human and civil rights of all people.

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that IAOHRA encourages its members to support educational awareness opportunities to inform both the public and private sector on human rights and civil rights issues.

A rectangular box containing a handwritten signature in black ink. The signature appears to read "Robin A. Toma".

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Ending Murders of and Violence Against Black Transgender Women and Supporting Transgender Communities

WHEREAS, a principal objective of IAOHRA is to enhance human rights practices under the law; and

WHEREAS, “transgender” is defined by the Human Rights Campaign as “an umbrella term for people whose gender identity and/or expression is different from cultural expectations based on the sex they were assigned at birth”; and

WHEREAS, at least 22 transgender people were been killed in the United States in 2018 — 82 percent of them were women of color; 64 percent were under the age of 35; 55 percent lived in the South; and

WHEREAS, at least at least 28 transgender people were killed in 2017, which was the most on record, again disproportionately targeting transgender women of color and Black women in particular; and

WHEREAS, the murder of transgender people is significantly underreported because data collection is often incomplete or unreliable because some victims' deaths may go unreported, some victims may not be identified as transgender due to the refusal of law enforcement, and journalists and/or family members refuse to acknowledge gender identity; and

WHEREAS, when reporting on the deaths of these individuals, most news stations fail to include details on their lives, their stories, or what people may do to protect themselves if they are black transgender women who feel they are living at risk in their communities; and

WHEREAS, transgender women of color face enormously high rates of homelessness, unemployment, negative health outcomes, rates of depression and suicidal ideation, discrimination in their families, unjust treatment when seeking help from law enforcement, and homicide due to their transgender identity; and

WHEREAS, the Trump Administration continues to push egregious policies that harm transgender communities and wither away equal protection under the law; and

Ending Murders of and Violence Against Black Transgender Women and
Supporting Transgender Communities

WHEREAS, the United States Supreme Court will decide three cases concerning LGBT rights in the middle of the 2020 presidential campaign, centered around whether the Civil Rights Act of 1964 guarantees protections from workplace discrimination for gay and transgender people; and

WHEREAS, the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Article 7 prohibits employers from discriminating against employees on the basis of sex, race, color, national origin and religion; and

WHEREAS, **IAOHRA** will recognize the deaths of transgender women of color, who suffer violence and homicide at disproportionate rates.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that **IAOHRA** will work with its Members to support equal protection for the LGBTQI+ community so that they can live free of violence and discrimination.

A rectangular box containing a handwritten signature in black ink. The signature appears to read "Robin A. Toma".

Robin Toma, President IAOHRA

Flint Water Crisis

WHEREAS, Clean and safe drinking water is a necessity for life; and

WHEREAS, The Universal Declaration of Human Rights includes the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of oneself and one's family; and

WHEREAS, Over five years ago, water from the Flint River in Michigan began flowing through the city of Flint's pipes and into residents' homes; and

WHEREAS, The improperly treated water **caused the lead pipes to corrode and leach into the drinking water** of almost 100,000 people resulting in the death of number of residents as well as leading to health related issues and causing trauma that continues to the present affecting people of all ages, all races, all ethnicities, and all genders; and

WHEREAS, The children of Flint have been irreparably harmed by lead exposure resulting in long-term health problems, learning disabilities and behavioral issues; and

WHEREAS, The Flint water crisis was completely avoidable and represents a clear example of systemic racism at play; and

WHEREAS, Exposure to lead through contaminated drinking water in residences and schools, lead paint in housing and other sources is a continuing problem that extends beyond Flint to many other communities; and

WHEREAS, Federal and state governments have the duty and financial capacity to assist communities in eliminating exposure to lead while assisting those whose health has already been jeopardized by lead exposure; and

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, That IAOHRA support the people of the City of Flint by calling for continued support in investments and related resources in infrastructure to prevent lead contamination in water systems, schools and homes; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That IAOHRA supports substantially increase investments to monitor childhood lead exposure and treat the effects; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That IAOHRA joins with human rights experts from the United Nations that called the contamination of the water supply in Flint, Michigan a human rights issue and call for swift action to correct the situation; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, That IAOHRA supports providing victims of the Flint water disaster with lifetime health care coverage and such other resources needed to revitalize and rehabilitate the City of Flint.



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Hate Crime Reporting

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WHEREAS, a principal strategic goal of the International Association of Official Human Rights Agencies (IAOHRA) is to promote efforts to combat hate crime activities; and

WHEREAS, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (F.B.I.) Civil Rights Division defines a hate crime as a “criminal offense against a person or property motivated in whole or in part by an offender’s bias against a race, religion, disability, sexual orientation, ethnicity, gender, or gender identity”; and

WHEREAS, most hate crimes are never reported to law enforcement because targeted communities feel unsafe reporting them, reasonably doubt that law enforcement will respond effectively, find reporting too cumbersome, or distrust law enforcement; and

WHEREAS, immigrant communities specifically fear deportation or detention if they alert law enforcement; and

WHEREAS, existing hate crime legislation grants authority to federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies and prosecutors to investigate and prosecute hate crimes; and

WHEREAS, there are substantial disparities between the number of hate crimes committed, the number of hate crimes reported to local law enforcement, and the number of hate crimes reported to the F.B.I.; and

WHEREAS, these disparities are problematic, suggesting that both the pervasiveness of hate crimes and whether current efforts to stop them are effective are unknown; and

WHEREAS, the failure to monitor or address hate crimes erodes the trust between victimized communities and law enforcement agencies; and

WHEREAS, law enforcement hate crime reporting to the F.B.I. Uniform Crime Reporting System (UCR) is currently voluntary; thus, it is subject to the whims, politics, available resources, and perceived priorities of law enforcement officials; and

WHEREAS, in its most recent UCR report, released in November 2018, the F.B.I. reported that at least 91 cities with populations exceeding 100,000 either did not report any data to the F.B.I. or affirmatively reported zero hate crimes; and

WHEREAS, officers and prosecutors may need training to identify, investigate, and accurately report hate crimes and bias incidents.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that IAOHRA supports state or national legislation to incentivize or compel jurisdictions to accurately and uniformly report hate crimes to the F.B.I.



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IAOHRA's Expression of Gratitude to the City of Orlando, and the City of Orlando Office of Human Relations

WHEREAS, the International Association of Official Human Rights Agencies (IAOHRA) was graciously invited to conduct its 2019 conference in the City of Orlando, Florida, August 18th through 22nd, 2019; and

WHEREAS, Gwendolyn Wiggins, The City of Orlando's Human Relations Manager, who also ably serves IAOHRA as an At-Large board member, has dedicated her time and efforts – as well as those of her staff and colleagues in city government – to ensure a successful IAOHRA conference; and

WHEREAS, Human Relation Manager Wiggins' efforts, as with those of Conference Planning Committee members James Stowe and Diane Clements-Boyd, helped ensure a successful, educational, and impactful 2019 conference; and

WHEREAS, the time, effort, and energies expended are representative of the dedicated work being performed at the state and local level by all IAOHRA member agencies - as well as their personnel, in furtherance of IAOHRA's mission - to provide opportunities and forums for the exchange of ideas and information among member agencies and other human rights advocates; and

WHEREAS, IAOHRA is inspired by the words and wisdom of the civil rights heroes we enjoyed spending time with at the 2019 IAOHRA conference; and

WHEREAS, IAOHRA is humbled by the historical examples of the efforts of those engaged in the civil rights struggle as recounted at the 2019 IAOHRA conference;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that IAOHRA expresses its deepest gratitude to the City of Orlando, The City of Orlando's Office of Human Relations, and the people of Orlando, Florida, for being such gracious, warm, and welcoming hosts.



Robin Toma, President IAOHRA

Innocent Inmate Compensation

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WHEREAS, the International Association of Official Human Rights Agencies (IAOHRA) is a defender of equality in every aspect of American life, including equal justice for those convicted of criminal offenses; and

WHEREAS, the Innocence Project reported that, over the past 20 years, 362 people previously convicted of serious crimes in the United States were later exonerated by DNA testing. Twenty of those persons had been sentenced to death; and

WHEREAS, approximately 70% of the persons exonerated of serious crimes are members of racial and ethnic minority groups; and

WHEREAS, in light of the extremely high rate of incarceration in the United States, tens of thousands of innocent individuals have likely been convicted of crimes and served time in our nation's federal and state prisons; and

WHEREAS, when released from prison, these innocent victims are often homeless and destitute. In 21 states, the system that caused this injustice does not guarantee any form of compensation to those persons; and

WHEREAS, Article XIV of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which was ratified by the United States, requires compensation to persons wrongfully convicted of crimes under certain circumstances, such as when a conviction is reversed because later acquired evidence demonstrates conclusively that the person did not commit the crime for which he or she was convicted.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that IAOHRA supports the implementation of Article XIV of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights in the United States through the adoption of a federal Innocent Inmate Compensation Act that would compensate innocent inmates who are wrongfully convicted because of failures in the criminal justice system, and through state legislation requiring such compensation in those 21 states that do not currently require the same.



Robin Toma, President IAOHRA

Law Enforcement Accountability

WHEREAS, the International Association of Official Human Rights Agencies (IAOHRA) believes that an injustice to one is an injustice to all and embraces the ideology of unalienable human rights for all people; and

WHEREAS, a principal objective of IAOHRA is to enhance human rights practices under the law; and

WHEREAS, law enforcement officers are trained at various levels of force, including non-lethal force; and

WHEREAS, *Tennessee v. Garner*, 471 U.S. 1 (1985), held that under the Fourth Amendment, a law enforcement officer pursuing a fleeing suspect may use lethal force to preclude escape only if "the officer has probable cause to believe that the suspect poses a significant threat of death or serious physical injury to the officer or others;" and

WHEREAS, as a result of this decision, law enforcement officers may simply state that they feared for their life to justify shooting a person; and

WHEREAS, existing law authorizes a law enforcement officer to use reasonable force to effect an arrest, prevent escape, or overcome resistance, but it does not require an officer to retreat or desist from an attempt to make an arrest because of resistance or threatened resistance of the person being arrested; and

WHEREAS, many law enforcement related homicides deprive individuals of the due process of law guaranteed by the Fifth and Fourteenth Amendments to the Constitution of the United States; and

WHEREAS, law enforcement officers must be held accountable for the excessive use of force and/or unauthorized use of tactics that result in grievous injury or death.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that IAOHRA will work to update legislative language to hold law enforcement officers accountable for the excessive use of force and/or unauthorized tactics that result in grievous injury or death; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that IAOHRA will work to legislatively redefine the circumstances under which a homicide by a law enforcement officer is considered justifiable, changing the lenient *Tennessee v. Garner* standard to a more stringent standard that states that a homicide is justified when the homicide is in self-defense, or the defense of another, consistent with the existing legal standard for self-defense.

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Rue Landau
Philadelphia, PA

Gwendolyn Wiggins
Orlando, FL



Robin Toma, President IAOHRA

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Alisa Warren
First Vice President
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Carol Johnson
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Prescription Drug Affordability

WHEREAS, one of the core values of IAOHRA is to provide leadership in the development and enforcement of statutes and ordinances that work towards safeguarding human and civil rights of all people; and

WHEREAS, to protect our lives and our well-being, every family in America requires access to affordable prescription drugs; and

WHEREAS, 90% of brand name drugs increased in price between 2005 and 2016, and the major driver of prescription drug costs is price increases on existing drugs, rather than innovation resulting in new drugs entering the market; and

WHEREAS, African Americans are disproportionately hurt by the high cost of prescription drugs, due to existing inequities in income and health care; and

WHEREAS, African Americans are more susceptible to illnesses that require prescription drugs, yet are also less likely to have the money to pay for the prescription drugs due to income inequalities; and

WHEREAS, though the Affordable Care Act (ACA) reduced the number of uninsured Americans, over 28 million remain without insurance, and more than half of uninsured Americans under 65 are people of color; and

WHEREAS, for people who do not have insurance, paying the retail price of most prescription drugs can be impossible; and

WHEREAS, overall drug prices increased almost 9% in 2016 while general inflation increased just over 2% in the same period; and

WHEREAS, one in four individuals report not being able to afford their prescription drugs, resulting in approximately 45 million Americans in 2016 that did not fill a prescription due to prohibitive costs, and that non adherence results in an estimated \$100-\$300 billion of avoidable health care costs annually; and

WHEREAS, prescription drugs represent increasing proportions of overall health care spending, accounting for 25% of each dollar spent by commercial health plans; and

WHEREAS, state legislatures have the ability and the duty to enact legislation to create a Prescription Drug Affordability Board to protect residents from the skyrocketing costs of prescription drugs; and

WHEREAS, Maryland has taken a major step forward in bringing down the costs of prescription drugs by creating the nation's first Prescription Drug Affordability Board. The measure will help government reduce expenditures on drugs for their employees, freeing up public funds for other needs, such as education. This Board will act as a

watchdog for the public. It will carefully review drug costs and establish fair and affordable costs for state and local government.

WHEREAS, according to the World Health Organization Constitution (1946) and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), each person is endowed with a right to health, and by restricting access to prescription medications, particularly for minorities, this right is being infringed; and

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that IAOHRA supports the NAACP's call for a creation of a Prescription Drug Affordability Board in each state to determine how best to make prescription drugs more affordable for their residents, including: examining the entire drug supply chain, including the role of drug manufacturers and Pharmacy Benefit Managers (PBMs), and establishing maximum affordability payment rates for expensive drugs that create significant affordability problems for residents, building upon the tradition of health care cost scrutiny.

A rectangular box containing a handwritten signature in black ink. The signature appears to read "Robin A. Toma".

Robin Toma, President IAOHRA

Prohibiting Discrimination against Black Hair Textures and Hairstyles

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WHEREAS, during slavery, white American slave traders described Black hair as “dreadful” and perpetuated negative stereotypes and bias about Black hair textures and hairstyles.

WHEREAS, to this day, institutionalized racism and vestiges of slavery have created norms around professionalism and neatness which primarily comport with white, European standards of grooming and appearance, and serve to diminish, exclude, and otherize people of other races, ethnicities, or cultures.

WHEREAS, hair discrimination in employment and in places of public accommodation, such as schools, is rampant and continues to this day, impacting and jeopardizing employment and educational opportunities for Black people.

WHEREAS, due to discrimination and harmful racial stereotypes, Black hairstyles, including braids, locs, cornrows, twists, Bantu knots, and Afros are often considered by employers and other entities to be unprofessional, messy, unkempt, unhygienic, and/or disruptive.

WHEREAS, entities that enact policies prohibiting or targeting hair textures or hairstyles closely affiliated with Black people are engaging in a form of race discrimination.

WHEREAS, federal and state courts have historically failed to recognize and protect the rights of Black people to maintain natural hair or hairstyles closely affiliated with their racial identity in employment and in places of public accommodation, such as in the case *EEOC v. Catastrophe Mgmt. Solutions*, No. 14-13482 (11th Cir. Dec. 28, 2016), where the Eleventh Circuit Court of Appeals found that the employer did not engage in race discrimination under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act when it refused to hire a Black customer service representative because she styled her hair into locs, a violation of the company’s grooming policy.

WHEREAS, the New York City Commission on Human Rights, an anti-discrimination agency based in New York City, an IAOHRA member agency, released a seminal legal enforcement guidance in February 2019 clarifying that, under the New York City Human Rights Law, the right to be free from race discrimination includes the right of individuals to maintain natural hair, hairstyles or hair lengths, treated or untreated, that are closely associated with their racial, ethnic, or cultural identities in an effort to address these loopholes at a local level.

WHEREAS, the States of California and New York subsequently passed legislation in July 2019 outlawing hair discrimination against Black people in employment.

WHEREAS, we support the rights of Black people, and people of other races and ethnicities, to maintain natural hair, hairstyles, and hair lengths closely associated with their racial, ethnic, or cultural identities in all walks of life, including in employment and at schools, and recognize that prohibitions against these hair textures and hairstyles constitute a form of race discrimination.

Therefore, it is affirmed that IAOHRA members support efforts by agencies, cities, and states to acknowledge and outlaw race discrimination on the basis of hair, and that its members will advocate for other agencies, cities, and states to support similar efforts.

A rectangular box containing a handwritten signature in black ink. The signature appears to read "Robin A. Toma".

Robin Toma, President IAOHRA

Re-Defining Black in Standard Dictionaries

Robin S. Toma
President
Los Angeles, CA

WHEREAS, most standard dictionaries include in their definition of the word “black” examples of usage with negative connotations; and

Alisa Warren
First Vice President
St. Louis, MO

WHEREAS, in most standard dictionaries, definitions of the word “black” includes examples of usage relating to being evil, soiled, or stained; and

Carol Johnson
Second Vice President
Little Rock, AR

WHEREAS, these negative examples of usage for definitions of “black” are listed in many standard dictionaries prior to common usage relating to a person’s identity or skin color; and

Beverly Watts
Secretary
Nashville, TN

WHEREAS, there is a long and shameful history in the United States of associating the same negative connotations as found in many standard dictionaries to persons who are black solely because of their race and/or color; and

Angela Rush
Treasurer
Fort Worth, TX

Jean Kelleher
Immediate Past President
Alexandria, VA

WHEREAS, as part of their “Redefine Black” campaign, Procter & Gamble’s *My Black Is Beautiful* is encouraging the changing of standard dictionaries to place examples of usage in the definition of the word “black” to first relate to a person’s identity or color, without examples of usage containing negative connotations; and

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WHEREAS, this campaign also recommends that the word “Black”, when relating to a person’s identity or color, be capitalized; and

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WHEREAS, nothing in Procter & Gamble’s “Redefine Black” campaign, nor in this resolution, seeks to change the meaning of the word “Black” as may be used by local, state or federal government for purposes of compiling or maintaining various demographic data, taking census of the population, or other purposes in furtherance of maintaining statistics, or providing programs and services; and

Regional Representatives:

James L. Stowe, Atlantic
Montgomery County, MD

WHEREAS, nothing in Procter & Gamble’s “Redefine Black” campaign, nor in this resolution, seeks to change the meaning of the word “Black” as given meaning within local, state or federal codes, statutes or caselaw; and

Diane Clements-Boyd, Midwest
Evansville, IN

Paul Valenti, South
Clearwater, FL

WHEREAS, a principal strategic goal of the International Association of Official Human Rights Agencies (IAOHRA) is to eliminate discrimination and bias based on one’s race and/or color; and

Jerry Lee, Western
Olympia, WA

WHEREAS, IAOHRA understands the powerful force of language, and the pernicious societal biases which, whether consciously or unconsciously, can be influenced through associating the word “black” with negative connotations.

Members-at-Large:

Tamie Dixon-Tatum
Anderson, IN

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that IAOHRA supports the principles behind the “Redefine Black” campaign, joins Procter & Gamble in its efforts to change the manner in which “black” is defined in standard dictionaries, and encourages others to support this initiative.

Rue Landau
Philadelphia, PA

Gwendolyn Wiggins
Orlando, FL



Robin Toma, President IAOHRA

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**RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF PROMOTING AND PROTECTING
HUMAN RIGHTS AS DEFINED IN THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF
HUMAN RIGHTS**

WHEREAS, IAOHRA's goals are "to foster human and intergroup relations, to enhance human rights practices under law, and to promote civil and human rights around the world";

WHEREAS, international human rights are articulated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and include a broad range of laws, norms, and values that recognize and promote the fundamental humanity and dignity of every person, as well as the necessity of fairness and opportunity for all people, and that enable people to meet their basic needs and to enjoy basic civil, political, social, economic and cultural rights;

WHEREAS, a basic tenet of the human rights framework is that human rights must start at home, and must involve and reflect the needs and expertise of local communities, and that governments have an affirmative obligation to respect, protect and fulfill these rights; and local governments are on the frontlines of upholding these core values, which are critical to the success of our communities;

WHEREAS, as demonstrated in cities and counties in Alabama, California, Florida, Hawaii, Illinois, North Carolina, New York, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Washington, as well as Washington, D.C., international human rights provide a powerful framework for local governance;

WHEREAS, State and local agencies and programs are vital to ensuring awareness, and fulfillment of human rights;

WHEREAS, the US Conference of Mayors has affirmed the importance of the international human rights principles of dignity, equality and opportunity; and to uphold and promote these rights;

WHEREAS, IAOHRA members have a long history of advancing civil and human rights, including through contributions to global dialogues on ways to address all forms of discrimination; participation in United Nations reviews of the US human rights record by the UN Human Rights Committee and Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination; and meetings with UN experts, including the UN Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia, and related intolerance; and the UN Special Rapporteur on Housing; the Working Group on People of African Descent and through the Universal Periodic Review Process;

WHEREAS, IAOHRA members have continuously committed to promote and protect international human rights locally, and to advance racial and gender equity through past resolutions;

RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF PROMOTING AND PROTECTING HUMAN RIGHTS AS DEFINED IN THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

WHEREAS, there has been increasing policy and public discourse fueling xenophobia, Islamophobia, racism, and sexism, and threats to vulnerable communities, which often intersect with poverty-based discrimination or other forms of marginalization, resulting in fear and insecurity within our communities; and

WHEREAS, the federal government has taken action to disengage, and undermine efforts of regional and global human rights mechanisms designed to foster global human rights accountability, which represent serious setbacks to the United States' commitment to universal human rights and multilateral engagement;

WHEREAS, IAOHRA members are committed to putting an end to acts of hate, bigotry, discrimination, and unconscious and expressed bias, as well as underlying structural, systemic, and institutional racism, all of which breed trauma and violence and hinder a fully inclusive and healthy democracy; and committed to fostering an inclusive democracy and to protect and respect fundamental human rights of dignity and equality for all people; and

WHEREAS, our human rights ideals demand that we promote and defend the values of racial, ethnic, gender, religious, and sexual orientation equity and justice, and that we combat discrimination in all its forms, and recognize the rights of individuals to live their lives with dignity, free of discrimination and targeting because of their identity, including faith, race, national origin, gender, disability, and immigration status;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that we commit to uphold our core human rights ideals and promote policies that foster inclusion, unity, tolerance, and compassion; and to respect, protect and ensure the full range of human rights – civil, political, economic, social and cultural – for all members of our community;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that IAOHRA urges the United States to commit to Universal Human Rights, as defined in the UDHR; and to constructively participate in the activities of international and regional human rights mechanisms to foster accountability; as well as to promote human rights education and awareness, in particular, in relation to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination;

THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that IAOHRA and its members will continue to undertake actions that promote the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, including through participation in the UN Universal Periodic Review Process in 2019-2020 and work of UN Treaty Bodies; and work with local, national and international partners to monitor, document and publicly report on the human rights impacts of laws, policies, and practices of U.S. federal, state, and local governments.



Robin Toma, President IAOHRA

RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF THE UN DECADE OF PEOPLE OF AFRICAN DESCENT

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WHEREAS, in 2015, The United Nations General Assembly launched an International Decade dedicated to People of African Descent (IDPAD) via resolution 68/237 in order to “strengthen national, regional and international cooperation in relation to the full enjoyment of economic, social, cultural, civil and political rights by people of African descent, and their full and equal participation in all aspects of society.”

WHEREAS, the IDPAD aims to promote and fulfill the human rights recognized in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights; strengthen knowledge of and respect for the heritage, cultures, and contributions of people of African descent; to adopt legal frameworks to ensure implementation of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination and the Durban Programme of Action;

WHEREAS, the IDPAD calls for concrete and practical national level action to combat racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance faced by people of African descent, taking into account the particular situation of women, girls and young males in the following, including through adoption and implementation of laws, policies, and programs related to justice and development;

WHEREAS, the right to equality and non-discrimination are foundational to progress on addressing these persistent challenges; and the IDPAD highlights the ongoing need for “effective protection for People of African descent, and review and repeal of all laws that have discriminatory effect on people of African Descent facing multiple, aggravated or intersecting forms of discrimination,” based on grounds that may include “sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, social origin, property, birth, disability or other status.”

WHEREAS, education and awareness raising on equality, which create space for open debate; highlight the importance of the fight against racism, discrimination, and intolerance, are essential for realizing the aims of the IDPAD;

WHEREAS, national measures to promote equality should include improving access to justice, as well as access to education, employment, health, and housing;

WHEREAS, efforts to design a permanent UN forum on people of African Descent, and draft a Declaration on the Rights of People of African Descent are ongoing;

WHEREAS, IAOHRA’s goals are “to foster human and intergroup relations, to enhance human rights practices under law, and to promote civil and human rights around the world”;

RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF THE UN DECADE OF PEOPLE OF AFRICAN
DESCENT

WHEREAS, IAOHRA has continually called for, and supported, implementation of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD); engaged in human rights awareness-raising; and recommended that the United States establish institutionalized, transparent and effective national level mechanisms to monitor and implement human rights principles;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that IAOHRA members commit to uphold and promote the aims of the International Decade of People of African Descent; including through public education and other appropriate means;

THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that IAOHRA commits to contribute to local, national, and international dialogues aimed at strengthening legal frameworks to foster the full enjoyment of economic, social, cultural, civil and political rights by people of African descent, and their full and equal participation in all aspects of society.

A rectangular box containing a handwritten signature in black ink. The signature appears to read "Robin A. Toma".

Robin Toma, President IAOHRA

RESOLUTION TO THE IAOHRA BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF PROPOSING A HUMAN RIGHTS APPROACH TO GUN VIOLENCE

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Orlando, FL

WHEREAS, recent mass shootings in El Paso Texas and Dayton Ohio, leaving 31 dead and 51 injured have once again *temporarily* raised the issue of gun violence as a national crisis,

WHEREAS, as of August 5, 2019, there have been 255 mass shootings in the United States, as defined by shootings where four or more people are shot, excluding the shooter,

WHEREAS, communities which previously believed themselves to be insulated and immune from the ravages of gun violence understand all too well now that no such place exists in America anymore,

WHEREAS, A failure in national leadership suggests to some that hate is acceptable, if not encouraged, empowering haters to act out their misguided agendas to frighten, oppress, and murder those whom they deem to be underserving of America's promised freedoms,

WHEREAS, gun violence has been a way of life for black and brown communities in impoverished urban areas of America for much too long,

WHEREAS, gun homicides are concentrated in cities. Half of all gun homicides took place in just 127 cities, which represented nearly a quarter of the U.S. population. Within these cities, gun homicides are most prevalent in racially segregated neighborhoods with high rates of poverty,

WHEREAS, Black Americans represent the majority of gun homicide victims, and are 10 times more likely to die by gun homicide than white Americans,

WHEREAS, a multitude of societal problems stemming from the legacy of slavery including discrimination, segregation, racist government policies, discriminatory corporate practices, under-funded schools, inadequate housing, lack of job opportunities, disinvestment, and other barriers to full participation in American society has created conditions ripe for gun violence in our communities,

WHEREAS, local governments, community organizations, and not-for-profit entities are fighting an uphill battle to get guns off our streets, and out of the hands of those who seek to do harm and destruction in our communities,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors of IAOHRA calls on President Trump and Congress to reduce the hateful rhetoric flowing from our nation's

RESOLUTION TO THE IAOHRA BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF PROPOSING A
HUMAN RIGHTS APPROACH TO GUN VIOLENCE

capital which only serves to divide us as a nation, and embolden those with agendas of hate to escalate their assault on the people of America, and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that IAOHRA calls on President Trump and Congress to work together to develop and implement sensible gun control legislation to end the domestic terrorism impacting every region of the country and the very essence of our freedoms as Americans, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, upon passage of this resolution the IAOHRA will disseminate copies of the resolution to the President and Congress.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robin A. Toma", enclosed within a thin black rectangular border.

Robin Toma, President IAOHRA

The FCHR Celebrates 50 Years of Serving Florida and the Florida Civil Rights Act

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WHEREAS, the Florida Commission on Human Relations was created in 1969 to enforce the Florida Civil Rights Act, and was charged with addressing discrimination through education, outreach, and partnerships, and

WHEREAS, in 1983, the Legislature enacted this state's Fair Housing Act to ensure that the State of Florida would make every effort to provide equal access to housing for all residents and to prohibit discrimination in the sale, rental, or financing of any dwelling on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, or religion, and

WHEREAS, the Fair Housing Act was amended in 1989 to prohibit discrimination based on a person's disability or familial status, and

WHEREAS, in 1992, the Legislature amended the mission of the Florida Commission on Human Relations to include enforcement of anti-discrimination laws and expanded the commission's role with respect to discrimination in public lodging, food service establishments, and private clubs, and

WHEREAS, the Florida Commission on Human Relations promotes freedom from discrimination based on race, color, religion, gender, pregnancy, national origin, age, disability, sex or marital status, and

WHEREAS, the Florida Commission on Human Relations promotes and encourages mutual understanding and respect among members of all economic, social, racial, religious, and ethnic groups, and

WHEREAS, the mission of the International Association of Official Human Rights Agencies (IAOHRA) is to provide opportunities and forums for the exchange of ideas and information among member agencies and other human rights advocates.

WHEREAS, IAOHRA provides assistance in the development of programs for eliminating illegal discrimination in employment, housing, education, public accommodations, public services and commercial transactions, including banking and lending practices.

WHEREAS, 2019 marks the 50th anniversary of the establishment of the Florida Commission on Human Relations, **NOW, THEREFORE**,

Be It Resolved by the International Association of Human Rights Agencies: That the IAOHRA recognizes the Florida Commission on Human Relations on the occasion of its 50th anniversary and commends the commission on its many significant accomplishments.



Robin Toma, President IAOHRA