

RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL

No. 822

Approved December 22, 2003

WHEREAS, The City of Providence recognizes that a threat to any one person's Constitutional rights is a threat to the rights of all; and

WHEREAS, The City of Providence has been and remains committed to the protection of civil rights and liberties for all residents; and

WHEREAS, The United States Constitution guarantees all persons living in the United States certain fundamental rights including freedom of religion, speech, assembly and privacy; protection from unreasonable searches and seizures; due process and equal protection; and access to counsel, presumption of innocence and a fair, speedy public trial; and

WHEREAS, A great crime against humanity occurred on September 11, 2001, resulting in new federal laws and enforcement powers, including the USA Patriot Act signed by President George W. Bush on October 26, 2001; and

WHEREAS, The USA Patriot Act was written to respond to the attack on our nation, it weakens, contradicts and undermines the basic constitutional rights outlined above. The Act, a 342 page document, was hastily enacted in six weeks without public hearings, or a Congressional "mark-up"; and

WHEREAS, Examples of the Patriot Act's threat to these fundamental rights include the Government's expanded power to: engage in limited judicial supervision of telephone and Internet surveillance; grant law enforcement and intelligence agencies broad access to sensitive medical, mental health, financial, and educational records with little, if any, judicial oversight; expand the government's ability to conduct secret searches of individual's homes and businesses, including monitoring what books are bought from bookstores or borrowed from libraries; and limits the disclosure of public documents and records under the Freedom of Information Act; and

WHEREAS, The Department of Justice interpretations of the Patriot Act and Executive Orders appear to impact on selective racial and religious groups including residents of other nations. This has caused alarm among many of our local citizens and non-citizens who fear an emergent climate for racial and ethnic profiling. This is especially disconcerting because the City of Providence is home to a diverse population, whose contributions are vital to the city's character and function; and

WHEREAS, Many other communities and over 120 cities throughout the country have enacted resolutions reaffirming support for civil rights and civil liberties in the face of government policies that threaten these values, and are demanding accountability from federal agencies regarding the use of these new powers.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the City Council of the City of Providence, affirms that any efforts to end terrorism not be waged at the expense of the fundamental civil liberties of the people of Providence, and all citizens of the United States; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the City of Providence affirms the rights of all people, including United States citizens and citizens of other nations, living within the City in accordance with the Bill of Rights and the Fourteenth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution; and

IN CITY COUNCIL
JUL 3 2003
FIRST READING
REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON
ORDINANCES
Michael R. Clavett
CLERK
Ans

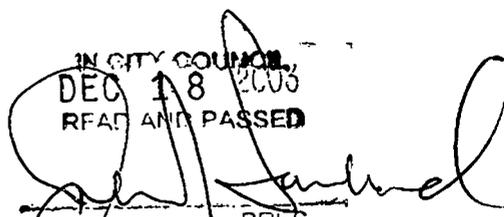
Amielman Segal

THE COMMITTEE ON
Ordinances
Recommendation - Schedule
John M. Hryn P. Hryn
CLERK
9-17-03
Ans 10-7-03 - P. Hryn held

THE COMMITTEE ON
ORDINANCES
Approves Passage of
The Within Ordinance
John M. Hryn
12-10-03
Clerk

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the City Council of Providence urges the city administration and its citizens during the course of their daily life to be guided by the collective responsibility and obligation of safeguarding the constitutional protections afforded all people of our city. The Council recognizes that this is the paramount responsibility of local law enforcement personnel, appointed and elected government offices that are ultimately responsible for upholding the solemn oath they have taken to preserve, protect and defend the Constitution of the United States and the State of Rhode Island, and

FURTHER RESOLVES, That the Providence City Council calls on our United States Representatives and Senators to monitor the implementation of the Act and Executive Orders cited herein and actively work for the repeal of the Act or those sections of the Act including Executive Orders that violate fundamental rights and liberties as stated in the United States Constitution and its Amendments.

IN CITY COUNCIL,
DEC 18 2003
READ AND PASSED

PRES.

CLERK

APPROVED

DEC 22
MAYOR