

RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL

No. 97

Approved February 14, 2019

WHEREAS, On January 7, 2019, Lashonda Hazard, age 27, unexpectedly passed away at Women and Infants Hospital with her unborn child; and

WHEREAS, She was refused care and help, treated unfairly and poorly, and made to wait until she died; and

WHEREAS, Unfortunately, this is not the only case of Black women in the United States being denied proper treatment and care during pregnancy and childbirth; and

WHEREAS, Black women are two hundred forty-three percent (243%) more likely to die from pregnancy or childbirth-related causes, in large part due to a lack of being heard, being seen, and being believed; and

WHEREAS, A structural shift is crucial to ensure the health and safety of Black women; and

WHEREAS, Black women in Providence, as well as other women of color, are further more uniquely impacted by other issues, such as the current housing crisis and growing wage inequality; and

WHEREAS, According to RI Kids Count, a single-parent household with two children needs to earn \$52,932 a year to meet its basic needs; and

WHEREAS, However, roughly sixty percent (60%) of Providence households earn less than \$50,000 a year, with thirty-six percent (36%) of households earning less than \$25,000; and

WHEREAS, Currently, in Providence, twenty-four percent (24%) of households are families, with forty-two percent (42%) of those households being single women with children; and

WHEREAS, Such conditions are a cause of toxic stress for both parents and children, leading to health issues and instability; and

WHEREAS, Inequity in wages and income are also an issue that disproportionately impact women of color in Providence; and

WHEREAS, Inability to attain a living wage makes housing and living much more unstable for families, particularly single women of color; and

WHEREAS, There needs to be a committed fight for a \$15/hour minimum wage; and

WHEREAS, However, even that is not enough and a push should also be made for \$20/hour as it currently costs \$31/hour to make living wages in Rhode Island; and

WHEREAS, It is important to recognize the Indigenous women and tribes on this land that have been historically and systemically erased but are very much still in full existence; and

WHEREAS, Providence is also a sanctuary city that should always be welcome and open to immigrants and refugees; and

WHEREAS, Providing protections for immigrant mothers, families, and community members is of the utmost priority, particularly in a time when their rights and humanity are at risk; and

WHEREAS, It is imperative to be committed to the cause of women's rights and gender equality, especially and most importantly Black women and women of color; and

WHEREAS, There should be a concerted effort to address systemic racism in the City of Providence, especially as it impacts Black women and women of color; and

WHEREAS, These issues exist at a national and global level as well; and

WHEREAS, Data from The World Bank showed that women, on average, are paid 60 to 75 percent of a man's wage; and

WHEREAS, The average gender wage gap is 23 percent around the world, however, this rises to 40 percent for African-American women in the United States; and

WHEREAS, According to ActionAid, closing the employment participation gap and wage gap between men and women would increase women's average income, globally, by up to 76 percent, which is calculated to have a global value of \$17 trillion; and

WHEREAS, In 1975, the United Nations officially adopted March 8 as International Women's Day to commemorate the movement for women's rights and call for further change in achieving gender equality; and

WHEREAS, March 8, 2019 is International Women's Day 2019, a day to celebrate the achievement of women in the past, present, and future and restate commitments to empowering women across the nation and world; and

WHEREAS, In particular, it is a day to renew and commit to a focus of listening to, believing, empowering, and following Black women and women of color in the City of Providence.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, That the Providence City Council supports the goals of International Women's Day and recognizes that the economic, social, and political empowerment of women is linked to the growth, development, and creation of opportunities for every member of society.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Providence City Council supports and believes the voices of Black women and women of color in Providence and recognizes the systemic oppression that disproportionately impacts them and commits to addressing those issues to bring equity, stability, and safety to every community member of Providence.

IN CITY COUNCIL

FEB 07 2019

READ AND PASSED

Sabrina Mats
PRES.

Lowell Hays
CLERK

I HEREBY APPROVE.

[Signature]
Mayor
Date: *2/14/19*