

RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL

No. 186

Approved June 7, 2010

WHEREAS, Tam Tran, 27, a Brown University graduate student and immigration activist, and Cinthya Felix, 26, a Columbia University graduate student who also was an immigration activist, passed away in a car accident in Maine on Saturday, May 18, 2010; and

WHEREAS, Tam was born in Germany to Vietnamese refugee parents who fought Communism in their country; and

WHEREAS, When Tam was six years old, her family moved to the United States seeking asylum, but with their application in limbo, Tam and her family found themselves stateless—denied return to Germany because they are not of German origin, and unable to return to Vietnam due to their family's anti-communist history and persecution there; and

WHEREAS, A budding scholar, Tam was pursuing her Ph.D. in the Department of American Civilization at Brown University at the time of her death; and

WHEREAS, Tam was a dedicated and fearless leader for immigrant rights, who advocated on behalf of undocumented immigrant youth in search of education; and

WHEREAS, In 2007, Tam took the courageous step of testifying in the United States Congress in support of the Development, Relief and Education for Alien Minors Act (the "DREAM Act")—a bill that would provide pathways to citizenship by granting a six-year conditional permanent legal residency to undocumented students who met certain criteria—and although the bill failed, Tam continued to work for its passage, and was a tireless activist until the day of her untimely death; and

WHEREAS, Tam stated before Congress, "The truth is, I am culturally an American...I consider myself a Southern Californian. I grew up watching Speed Racer and Mighty Mouse every Saturday morning," yet ultimately, although not deportable, she was denied formal legal citizenship, which would bring her full rights and security; and

WHEREAS, According to friends and peers, Tam embodied true citizenship by overcoming significant obstacles, embracing an American identity, and fighting for equality and justice for all, just as the Founding Fathers did; and

WHEREAS, Tam and her good friend Cinthya Felix were tireless advocates for undocumented students in the United States; and

WHEREAS, The two women became role models for younger immigrants, and as undergraduates at UCLA, volunteered their time tutoring students in Los Angeles public schools, and mentoring youth at the Boys and Girls Club; and

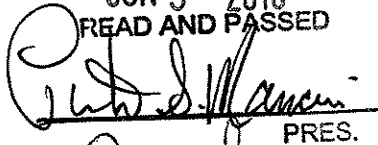
WHEREAS, Cinthya, whose family moved from Mexico to the United States when she was fifteen, became the first undocumented student admitted to Columbia University's School of Public Health, and had plans to become a physician and return to Los Angeles to make health care accessible to underserved communities.

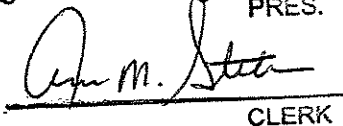
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the City of Providence extends its condolences to the Tran and Felix families for the loss of their daughters; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the City of Providence does hereby petition the United States Congress to: 1) Grant Tam Tran and Cinthya Felix citizenship posthumously to recognize their service to the immigrant community and the nation as activists and scholars, and 2) Adjust the immigration status of the surviving members of the Tran and Felix families as an honor to the two departed activists; and

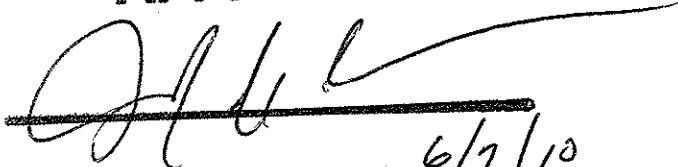
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That upon approval, copies of this resolution shall be forwarded to the members of the Rhode Island Congressional delegation with the request that this resolution be officially entered into the Congressional Record.

IN CITY COUNCIL
JUN 3 - 2010
READ AND PASSED


PRES.


CLERK

APPROVED


MAYOR 6/7/10