City of Providence
STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL

No. 163
EFFECTIVE March 30, 2025

WHEREAS, The City of Providence has long stood as a bastion of free speech, civil liberties, and immigrant rights, upholding the fundamental principles of democracy and justice, and stands firmly against the authoritarian, xenophobic, and reckless immigration policies of the Trump administration, which have fueled a climate of fear, lawlessness, and abuse of power; and

WHEREAS, The Trump administration has demonstrated a blatant disregard for human rights, due process, and judicial authority, turning legal residents into political targets and treating immigrants like criminals without justification; and

WHEREAS, The Trump administration has engaged in egregious acts of political persecution, including the detention, deportation, and harassment of legal immigrants, students, and professionals contributing to American society; and

WHEREAS, Mahmoud Khalil, a lawful permanent resident and Columbia University graduate, was arrested and faces deportation for exercising his constitutionally protected right to protest, a clear attempt to silence political dissent and suppress free speech; and

WHEREAS, Leqaa Kordia, a Palestinian student from the West Bank, was arrested by the Department of Homeland Security for allegedly overstaying her student visa, with federal authorities citing a visa termination in 2022 despite her continued presence and participation in student activism at Columbia University; and

WHEREAS, Ranjani Srinivasan, an Indian doctoral student at Columbia University, was forced into "self-deportation" after her student visa was revoked this month, a move that underscores the administration's politically motivated targeting of student activists; and

WHEREAS, The Department of Homeland Security's public statements regarding the arrests of Kordia and Srinivasan included baseless and inflammatory accusations, including false claims of terrorist affiliations, demonstrating a deliberate effort to demonize and intimidate pro-Palestinian student activists; and

WHEREAS, Fabian Schmidt, a lawful U.S. green card holder and longtime resident of the United States, was detained by immigration officers at Logan International Airport despite holding valid documentation and is currently being held at the Donald W. Wyatt Detention Facility in Central Falls, Rhode Island, underscoring the arbitrary and discriminatory enforcement of immigration laws; and

WHEREAS, In a further escalation of its extreme immigration enforcement measures, the Trump administration has invoked a rarely used 1798 law to justify the mass deportation of 238 alleged gang members to El Salvador, including individuals with tenuous or no proven ties to criminal organizations, raising serious concerns about due process violations, racial profiling, and the erosion of legal protections for immigrants; and

WHEREAS, The use of this archaic law to expel individuals-including Venezuelan nationals alleged to be affiliated with the Tren de Aragua gang-sets a dangerous precedent for politically motivated deportations and the broad application of unchecked executive power against immigrants, activists, and marginalized communities; and

WHEREAS, The arrest of Mr. Khalil, the detention of Mr. Schmidt, the forced departure of Ms. Srinivasan, the arrest of Ms. Kordia, and the indiscriminate deportation of individuals under the guise of "gang enforcement" reflect a broader, calculated effort by the Trump administration to weaponize immigration enforcement, intimidate non-citizens, and undermine America's values of fairness and justice; and

WHEREAS, President Trump has openly admitted that Mr. Khalil's arrest is "the first arrest of many to come," signaling a dangerous escalation in the administration's crackdown on free speech, student activism, and political opposition; and

WHEREAS, The actions of the Trump administration violate the First Amendment rights of students, professionals, and immigrants, creating a chilling effect on free speech and further endangering civil liberties nationwide; and

WHEREAS, The targeting of pro-Palestinian voices under the guise of combating antisemitism, along with the broad misuse of deportation policies to purge activists and asylum seekers, not only mischaracterizes legitimate criticism of a foreign government but also sets a dangerous precedent of using state power to silence political opposition.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Providence City Council strongly condemns the Trump administration's egregious violations of human rights, judicial authority, and fundamental decency in the treatment of Mahmoud Khalil, Leqaa Kordia, Ranjani Srinivasan, Fabian Schmidt, and the hundreds of individuals subjected to arbitrary and politically motivated deportations; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Providence City Council demands a full congressional investigation into these gross abuses of power and calls for accountability for all officials involved in the unlawful detention and deportation of legal residents, student activists, and asylum seekers; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That Providence will not be silent in the face of authoritarian overreach and will continue to fight for the rights, dignity, and protections of all immigrants, residents, and professionals contributing to our society; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to the President of the United States, the United States Secretary of State, the Rhode Island congressional delegation, the National Lawyers Guild, and the ACLU of Rhode Island, to ensure that these injustices do not go unnoticed and unchallenged.

IN CITY COUNCIL
MAR 20 2025
READ AND PASSED

RACHEL M. MILLER, PRESIDENT

Tina L. Mastroianni
CLERK

Effective without the
Mayor's Signature

Tina L. Mastroianni

Tina L. Mastroianni
City Clerk