



PRESS STATEMENT

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WHILE TECH LEADERS MEET WITH TRUMP, CITY COUNCIL APPROVES HUMAN RIGHTS CITY RESOLUTION IN SILICON VALLEY

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Mountain View, CA, December 14, 2016 — While tech leaders were meeting with President-Elect Trump on Wednesday, Mountain View councilmembers voted Tuesday night to approve a resolution designating Mountain View as a Human Rights City.

The new resolution adopts the United Nation’s 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights as guiding principles for “the laws, practices, and policies carried out with and on behalf of the residents of Mountain View.” According to the resolution “the City aspires to be a leader among cities in advancing human rights and human dignity [by] explicitly embracing the principles of equality, inclusion, respect, involvement, and the recognition of human dignity.”

The resolution was proposed and drafted by the city’s Human Relations Commission, with the support and assistance of the International Human Rights Clinic at Santa Clara Law. The Clinic provided training, research, and expertise about what a Human Rights City resolution would mean for Mountain View residents. Speaking before City Council, the Clinic’s Director, Francisco Rivera stated, “with this resolution, local government in the heart of Silicon Valley is making a public commitment to the protection of basic human dignity. The timing of this resolution is also important, as it provides a counter-narrative to the divisive discourse surrounding the election. This is the right message to send at the right time.”

Mountain View Mayor Pat Showalter, echoed those sentiments during the City Council’s session, stating, “at this time, we need to stand up and say that human rights are very important (...) and are part of the founding documents of our nation.”

This resolution, “and human rights in general,” said Councilmember Lenny Siegel, “have become much more important to us in the wake of the national election.” “We have to observe human rights,” he added, “and I am hoping we can figure out a way to use the adoption of the Declaration as a way to help us figure out how to address the incoming threats that most of us are

expecting as a result of the national election. (...) I think Mountain View can be a leader in defending [human rights].”

“There is a tremendous amount of concern in the community. [President-elect Trump] has expressed complete disdain and disregard for core human rights”, said Vice Mayor Ken S. Rosenberg during the debate, adding that this resolution is a symbolic gesture that affirms the city’s rejection of such discriminatory discourse.

According to the resolution, “a Human Rights City is one whose residents and local authorities, through regular discussions and creative exchanges of ideas, come to understand that human rights, when widely known as a way of life, assist in identifying the issues and informs the actions in our community for meaningful social change.”

By becoming a Human Rights City, Mountain View is joining dozens of cities around the U.S. and throughout the world that have passed similar resolutions, including Pittsburgh, PA; Boston, MA, and Washington, D.C. The growing movement of Human Rights Cities across the U.S. has led to the creation of a [National Human Rights City Network](#), which is an initiative of the [US Human Rights Network](#) (USHRN) that works to advance effective models and practices for local implementation of human rights.

The resolution passed with five votes in favor (Chris Clark, R. Michael Kasperzak, Jr., Leonard M. Siegel, Ken S. Rosenberg, and Patricia Showalter) and two against (John M. Inks and John McAlister).

A video recording of the City Council’s session can be accessed [here](#), with the relevant discussion taking place from the 4hr 31min mark through the 5hr 28min mark.

About the International Human Rights Clinic

The International Human Rights Clinic (IHRC) is a program at Santa Clara Law that provides a unique educational opportunity for law students to gain first-hand, practical experience working on international human rights litigation, advocacy, and policy projects. The IHRC combines classroom education with supervised case and project management, providing students practical training in essential advocacy and lawyering skills while serving our community and promoting social justice.