

City Council

Motion without Notice

MM24.23	ACTION			Ward:All
---------	--------	--	--	----------

Toronto for all - United as an Inclusive Sanctuary City - by Mayor John Tory, seconded by Councillor Joe Cressy and Councillor Joe Mihevc

** This Motion has been deemed urgent by the Chair.*

** This Motion is not subject to a vote to waive referral. This Motion has been added to the agenda and is before Council for debate.*

Recommendations

Mayor John Tory, seconded by Councillor Joe Cressy and Councillor Joe Mihevc, recommends that:

1. City Council re-affirm Toronto as a Sanctuary City where all residents have full rights to access all city services and city-administered services without fear, regardless of their documentation status.
2. City Council direct City divisions, agencies and corporations to review their policies and procedures and those of their grant recipients to ensure consistency with Council's commitment as a Sanctuary City, and report back to the Community Development and Recreation Committee in the second quarter of 2017 with a progress update on the implementation of Council policies of access without fear for undocumented Torontonians.
3. City Council urge the Federal government to continue an immigration and refugee policy based on the values of inclusion, acceptance and non-discrimination, and that the position of Council be forwarded as a letter to the Government of Canada and Federal Opposition parties to that end.
4. City Council rejects discrimination based on religious, ethnic or national origin, affirms that refugees are welcome in our communities, and stands united with cities around the world against islamophobia, xenophobia and racism and calls on all Canadians, community leaders, and elected officials to speak out against discrimination and hate in our communities, across the country and around the world.

Summary

In Toronto we understand that diversity makes us stronger. We are a vibrant city where nearly half the population was born elsewhere, and where so many of us are immigrants to our city and nation.

The people who arrive in Toronto as immigrants and refugees help build our city and our country. They are children and parents, professionals and, often, the victims of persecution. They contribute to our economy and are leaders in our communities.

Over the past week, we have watched as the United States government has moved forward with executive orders on immigration targeting people from Muslim-majority countries. We also join all Canadians in mourning the six people whose lives were lost in the terrorist attack on the Centre Culturel Islamique in Quebec City on Sunday. This is a moment when we are called upon to stand up for those targeted by hateful and discriminatory acts and policies.

As one of the most diverse cities in the world, Toronto has a long history of speaking out against discrimination in all forms. And we have a moral obligation to speak up when a government declares lawful refugees, visitors and even its own permanent residents inadmissible and unwelcome.

In Toronto, our residents have opened their arms to Syrian refugees, and our City has supported a Newcomer Strategy and its Toronto for All campaign. Toronto has also affirmed itself a Sanctuary City, with a formal policy allowing all residents of Toronto to access City services regardless of immigration status, so that everyone can use our libraries, our parks, and be kept healthy and safe.

Now is the moment for us to reaffirm that commitment and to send a clear message that Toronto rejects all division, intolerance and hate.

No one should be made to feel afraid because of who they are, where they come from, and what they believe. People should never be persecuted and Islamophobia, xenophobia, and racism are unacceptable. A person's worth should never be determined by their race, religion, ethnicity, origin or citizenship status.

Now is the time for Toronto to show those impacted by these discriminatory policies that "you are welcome here". Now is the time for Toronto to stand together, united across our differences so that we remain strong and hold on to the fundamental rights and values that make our freedom possible.

Background Information (City Council)

Member Motion MM24.23