

RESOLUTION #2015-309

**BY THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF LANSING**

WHEREAS, the City of Lansing has been welcoming newcomers from all areas of the globe including from within the United States throughout its history, with more than half of Lansing metro area's population gain from 2000 to 2010 attributable to international immigration;

WHEREAS, Lansing's new Americans – including entrepreneurs, outstanding students, world-class scholars, small business owners, a Nobel Peace Prize nominee, at least two national poet laureates, international figures in human, women's and civil rights movements, among others – have contributed immensely to improvements in our local economy, the stabilization of our neighborhoods and our city's overall cultural and economic vibrancy;

WHEREAS, the city's public schools, in which students from 66 countries speak 53 languages, rank 4th in diversity in the State of Michigan;

WHEREAS, The Lansing City Council has recently affirmed its welcome of immigrant children and its commitment to the safety and security of all people in its public facilities in previous resolutions;

WHEREAS, the City of Lansing has long supported immigrants through mayoral tributes and proclamations and in funding services such as English as a Second Language courses;

WHEREAS, the city of Lansing was founded by settlers, like today's refugees and immigrants, who emigrated from the state of New York seeking refuge and opportunity on the banks of Michigan's largest river; today, the vast majority of the city's residents historically were welcomed here from somewhere else;

WHEREAS, the City of Lansing has also long served as a city of refuge for vulnerable immigrants, including 400 to 700 annually; "Refugees," as defined by the United Nations, have fled a documented and well-vetted "well-founded fear" of persecution under international law from nearly 40 nations.

WHEREAS, Michigan governors historically have played an important and constructive role in welcoming immigrants to our community; Lansing has a long history welcoming newcomers from around the United States and across the globe in partnership with private organizations and federal, state, and local governments;

WHEREAS, the national Welcome America initiative asks municipalities proclaiming themselves welcoming communities to commit to:

- Advancing a municipal or county - level proclamation or resolution declaring their locality to be a welcoming one**

RESOLUTION #2015-309

- Finding ways to institutionalize welcoming efforts through the adoption of policies and/or practices that fit the unique local context and promote inclusion within local government and the broader community
- Joining a cohort of cities and communities that want to become more welcoming
- Appointing at least one key municipal staff contact or preferably a small team of staff from across departments for the project
- Participating in three conference calls per year to share their own accomplishments and challenges and learn from promising practices from other Welcoming Cities and Counties
- Participating in an annual in-person meeting with other municipal leaders.

WHEREAS, the City of Lansing – in its support for refugees and immigrants, its collaboration with organizations, governments and communities providing a welcome to newcomers, its commitment to welcome newcomers on the part of the Mayor, the support for new Americans on the Lansing City Council, particularly through its Ad Hoc Committee on Diversity – already has achieved many of the commitments of a Welcoming City.

BE IT RESOLVED that the City of Lansing hereby officially declares itself a “Welcoming City.”

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Clerk shall send copies of this resolution to the Michigan Governor’s Office and to the state and federal legislators that represent the City of Lansing.

Chris Swope

12/14/2015

SIGNED BY
CHRIS SWOPE
LANSING CITY CLERK