

Board of Aldermen
City of Somerville
Massachusetts

City Hall
Tel. - 625-6600

April 22, 1993

RESOLUTION

- WHEREAS, The United States has historically served as a haven for refugees of religious and political persecution, and
- WHEREAS, Many thousands of refugees from around the world are fleeing from the violence and human rights violations that persist in their countries, and have come to the U.S. in search of safe haven, and
- WHEREAS, Many people have come to Somerville from other countries and become productive members of our community, and
- WHEREAS, The concept of observing basic human rights and providing aid to victims of conflict is mandated by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Geneva Conventions, and customary international law, and
- WHEREAS, The U.S. Refugee Act of 1980 established an asylum status which can be granted at the discretion of the federal government to any refugee, defined as a person "who, owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside his or her country of nationality and is unwilling or unable to avail him/herself of the protection of that country", and
- WHEREAS, In response to this situation, many religious communities across the nation, including one in Somerville, have elected to provide opportunity to refugees from other countries, in the belief that they are acting in accordance with international and federal law, and
- WHEREAS, The City of Somerville has a diverse cultural heritage and multi-national population, of which the City is proud, and has historically welcomed newcomers, and

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WHEREAS, The Governor's Executive Order of October, 1985, has affirmed the rights of equal access to services for all people living in the Commonwealth, regardless of citizenship or residency status, and

WHEREAS, The Board of Aldermen does not wish to expend City resources beyond the requirements of federal law, therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the City of Somerville is hereby declares its commitment to equal opportunity for all people, and that they shall be afforded all rights and privileges offered and supplied to all people residing or working in the City, and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Board of Aldermen recognizes there is no law which requires City departments and employees to volunteer to the Immigration and Naturalization Service information regarding the residency status of any individual in the City, and be it further

RESOLVED, That the City Clerk will communicate this Resolution to all City departments, to the Massachusetts Congressional delegation, to the local and national directors of the INS, and to President William Clinton, and be it further

RESOLVED, That the City Clerk will communicate to the Congressional delegation representing the citizens of Somerville in the Congress our demand that the Congress require non-discriminatory compliance with the Refugee Act of 1980, and be it further

City of Somerville, April 22, 1993

Roll Call Vote in Connection with Ald. Connolly's Resolution
to "declare commitment to all people"

BOARD OF ALDERMEN

	YES	NO	ABSENT
1 JOSEPH R. MACALUSO	1		
2 MARYANN C. CAPPELLO		1	
3 CATHLEEN O'DEA	2		
4 KENNETH JOYCE	3		
5 VINCENT P. CIAMPA		2	
6 HELEN CORRIGAN	4		1
7 RICHARD JOHNSON	5		
8 JOHN R. BUONOMO	6		
9 JOHN M. CONNOLLY	7		
10 GRACE A. ABRUZZIO	8		
11 THOMAS F. TAYLOR	9		

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Ald. J. Connolly

R E S O L U T I O N

Resolution declaring Somerville's
commitment to equal opportunity as
described herein.

Board of Aldermen

APR 22 1993

Resolution Adopted

Roll 9-2-0

Arthur Sampson

consideration moved
by Ald. Connolly failed
a voice vote.

4/27 1993
Michael E. Caputo

