



Legislation Text

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Res. No. 1092

Resolution calling upon the President to lift the Cuban embargo and end the Cuban travel ban.

By Council Members Barron, Rodriguez, Van Bramer, Rivera, Rosenthal, Menchaca, Adams, Ayala, Gibson and D. Diaz

Whereas, In December 2014, the Obama Administration announced its intention to normalize and restore diplomatic relations with the Cuban Castro regime, including expanding new regulations for travel and trade; and

Whereas, On October 14, 2016, a Presidential Policy Directive enshrined United States-Cuba Normalization Objectives including: 1) Government-to-Government Interaction; 2) Engagement and Connectivity; 3) Expanded Commerce; 4) Economic Reform; 5) Respect for Universal Human Rights, Fundamental Freedoms and Democratic Values; and 6) Cuban Integration into International and Regional Systems, to be implemented until such time as a future president reversed the Directive; and

Whereas, In 2016, the changes introduced by the Obama Administration enabled Americans to visit Cuba as individuals or in groups through 12 categories of authorized travel including family visits, official business of the U.S. government, foreign governments and certain intergovernmental organizations, journalistic activity, professional research and professional meetings, educational activities, religious activities, public performances including clinics, workshops, athletic and other competitions and exhibitions, support for the Cuban people, humanitarian projects, activities of private foundations or research or educational institutes, exportation, importation or transmission of information or informational materials and certain authorized export transactions; and

Whereas, In June 2019, President Trump rescinded the Obama administration's recently enacted Cuban-

American cultural trade and travel freedoms of 2016 by imposing new restrictions on Americans traveling to Cuba that no longer permitted group educational or cultural visits known as “people to people” trips unless they were booked before June 5, 2019; and

Whereas, The new travel restrictions preclude major cruise ships, private yachts or fishing vessels, as well as major airlines from stopping in Cuba unless individuals can prove they are traveling “under the support for Cuban people” category and can present proof of an itinerary with meetings and visits with local business owners or evidence of participation in local activities that include staying in a private home rather than a hotel; and

Whereas, Representatives of Cuban tour companies have cited the travel ban as detrimental to the economy and travel industry of the Cuban people; and

Whereas, While travel restrictions for Cuban-Americans visiting relatives in Cuba remain unchanged and are limited to no more than three visits per year, tighter restrictions have been imposed on the number of allowable financial remittances to family members, and are now capped at \$1,000.00 per person every three months compared to the unlimited remittances allowed under the Obama administration authorizations; and

Whereas, A United Nations General Assembly resolution found the Cuban embargo to inhibit collaborations between the two countries in a number of critical areas including education, cultural exchanges, scientific research, environmental protections and medical care such as vaccines for meningitis B, hepatitis B, monoclonal antibodies for kidney transplants and the only therapeutic vaccine in the world against advanced lung cancer, all of which serve as a detriment to the people of the United States and the people of Cuba; and

Whereas, Furthermore, the United Nations confirmed the Cuban embargo is opposed by a majority of the nations in the world as well as a majority of the people in the United States; and

Whereas, Historically, New York City has played a significant role in supporting a vibrant Cuban immigrant community comprised of businesses, newspapers, social and cultural organizations and political activism; and

Whereas, The New York metropolitan area is home to 150,000 Cuban-American residents who self-identify as being of Cuban ancestry; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, The Council of the City of New York call upon the President to lift the Cuban embargo and end the Cuban travel ban.

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