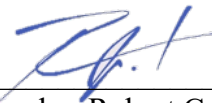


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2 Councilmember Kenyan R. McDuffie

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4 Councilmember Robert C. White, Jr.

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6 Councilmember Vincent C. Gray

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8 Councilmember Anita Bonds

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10 Councilmember Janeese Lewis George

11 

12 Councilmember Brianne K. Nadeau

13 A PROPOSED RESOLUTION

14 _____

15 IN THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

16 _____

17
18 To declare the sense of the Council that the United States should end the economic blockade of
19 Cuba and remove Cuba from the State Sponsors of Terrorism list due to the unjust harm it
20 causes the Cuban people.

21
22 RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, That this
23 resolution may be cited as the “Sense of the Council on the Restoration of Cuban American
24 Relations Resolution of 2023”.

25 Sec. 2. The Council finds that:

26 (1) In 1962, the United States began imposing an economic, commercial, and financial
27 embargo on Cuba.

28 (2) In 2014, President Barack Obama and Cuban President Raul Castro began work to re-
29 establish diplomatic relations between the United States and Cuba, as well as to remove Cuba
30 from the designated State Sponsors of Terrorism list. The goal was to normalize relations to
31 support Cuban residents and Cuban Americans and advance mutual interests.
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38 (3) However, President Donald J. Trump’s administration later imposed 243 new
39 sanctions on Cuba, including restrictions on Cuban Americans who send remittances to families
40 and businesses in Cuba. Additionally, the Trump administration added Cuba back to the State
41 Sponsors of Terrorism list. Former Secretary of State Mike Pompeo accused Cuba of “repeatedly
42 providing support for acts of international terrorism” without providing evidence to support these
43 claims.

44 (4) Under President Joe Biden’s administration, some travel restrictions have been partially
45 lifted, but many limitations remain. A complete restoration of travel and trade would greatly
46 benefit both countries. The current sanctions prevent meaningful engagement and trade between
47 the United States and Cuba, a policy that also punishes other countries and entities that engage
48 with Cuba. These sanctions, and the threat of secondary sanctions to other nations, continue to
49 inflict daily hardships on the people of Cuba, making it difficult for them to grow their economy,
50 maintain high quality healthcare, and improve their education systems.

51 (5) One example of the harm the embargo has had on Cuba, is that vital medical equipment
52 is in short supply, and humanitarian assistance following catastrophic events, such as hurricanes,
53 is often impeded due to these harmful policies. Calixto Garcia Hospital in Havana is Cuba’s main
54 trauma hospital. It only had 2 anesthesia machines as of 2020 as other countries had refused to
55 provide additional equipment due to fear of being sanctioned. The United States has the power to
56 improve challenges like these by lifting the threat of sanctions from partner countries.

57 (6) The economic impacts of the restrictions affect both countries. In 2017, the United
58 Nations estimated that the blockade had cost the Cuban economy \$130 billion USD since it was
59 instated, or more than \$2 billion each year. Although food exports are technically allowed under
60 the embargo, those in the United States who wish to export to Cuba must first obtain licenses or

61 authorizations from the Departments of Commerce and Treasury. This hurts United States
62 commercial interests by reducing trade with, or in some cases, completely eliminating, a potential
63 nearby trading partner. Although the sanctions do not completely bar other countries from trading
64 with Cuba, they require that any export containing more than 10% of American goods must first
65 obtain a license from the United States. This strained access to goods has a negative impact on
66 Cuban schools, universities, and research institutions as they often lack modern equipment.

67 (7) Cuba also lacks access to many technology services. Certain smartphone applications,
68 networks, and online services are inaccessible from Cuba. Amazon, PayPal and the Apple Store
69 are just a few examples of otherwise semi-global services unavailable to Cuban citizens. Without
70 a full and complete reversal of these restrictions, it will be the Cuban people, lacking full access
71 to common modern technology, who will continue to feel the effects of these sanctions most
72 acutely.

73 (8) Thus far, the United Nations has voted 30 times to condemn the United States embargo
74 on Cuba. In the most recent vote, only the United States and Israel voted against the resolution.
75 This stands in stark contrast to the 185 countries who voted in favor of the resolution. Here in the
76 United States, city councils, state legislatures, school boards, labor councils, unions and other
77 organizations have passed approximately 67 resolutions urging the end of the embargos,
78 encouraging scientific cooperation, and pushing the federal government to remove Cuba from the
79 list of State Sponsors of Terrorism. The power lies with President Biden to remove Cuba from the
80 list and to begin to normalize relations between our countries.

81 Sec. 3. It is the sense of the Council that President Biden and Congress should take all
82 necessary steps to end all aspects of the blockade imposed against Cuba by the United States and

83 remove Cuba from the State Sponsors of Terrorism list due to the unjust harm it causes to the
84 Cuban people.

85 Sec. 4. This resolution shall take effect immediately upon the first date of publication in
86 the District of Columbia Register.