

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: MAY 2, 2012

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

FROM: RASHAD M. YOUNG, CITY MANAGER 

SUBJECT: RESOLUTION PROPOSED BY THE ALEXANDRIA HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION SUPPORTING THE FAMILY OF TRAYVON MARTIN, DENOUNCING RACIAL PROFILING AND REAFFIRMING ALEXANDRIA'S COMMITMENT TO ENSURING AND PROTECTING THE RIGHTS OF ALL

ISSUE: Resolution supporting the family of Trayvon Martin, denouncing racial profiling and reaffirming the City's commitment to ensuring and protecting the rights of all.

RECOMMENDATION: That Council consider the attached resolution.

DISCUSSION:

On February 26, 2012, 17-year-old Trayvon Martin of Miami Gardens, Florida, was tragically killed, apparently for no reason other than being Black and wearing apparel that his assailant found objectionable. Members of the Alexandria Human Rights Commission were outraged by the City of Sanford's police department's response and discussed the need to address issues of racial profiling and vigilantism both locally and nationally. The Human Rights Commission at its April meeting reviewed a draft resolution presented by the Executive Committee, and Commission members offered amendments to the draft resolution. The Commission unanimously endorsed the submission of the resolution to the City Manager for consideration and presentation to Council.

ATTACHMENT: Resolution

STAFF:

Michele Evans, Deputy City Manager
Jean Kelleher Niebauer, Director, Office of Human Rights

RESOLUTION NO. ____

Supporting the family of Trayvon Martin, denouncing racial profiling and reaffirming the City's commitment to ensuring and protecting the rights of all

WHEREAS, the City of Alexandria has been on the forefront of promoting and encouraging respect for human rights for all, as evident in the passage of its Human Rights Ordinance and in the creation of the Human Rights Commission in 1975, and

WHEREAS, the City of Alexandria's Human Rights Commission recognizes that acts of racial discrimination that occur anywhere are unsettling to all communities and that the elimination of injustice transcends geographical borders, and

WHEREAS, on February 26, 2012, 17-year-old Trayvon Martin of Miami Gardens, Florida, was tragically killed for apparently no other reason than being Black and wearing apparel that his assailant found objectionable, and

WHEREAS, the City of Sanford's police department's investigation into the Trayvon Martin killing was perfunctory at best, and appeared committed to protecting the interests of the assailant rather than preserving the dignity of the deceased, and

WHEREAS, the City of Sanford's police department appeared blindly to adopt the assailant's version of events and erroneously invoked Florida's regressive and over-reaching, so-called "Stand Your Ground" law, and

WHEREAS, in the wake of the Trayvon Martin killing, public outrage spread across the Nation, among all races, eliciting rallies of protest in various cities, including the City of Alexandria.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL
OF ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA

That the City Council of Alexandria, Virginia:

1. Supports the family of Trayvon Martin and their fight for justice;
2. Denounces racial profiling and vigilantism, and reaffirms its commitment to ensuring and protecting the rights of all, without distinction as to race, color, age, sex, religion, disability, ancestry, national origin, marital status, familial status or sexual orientation, regardless of characterization; and

3. Reaffirms that the pursuit of justice and equality must never be taken for granted and is a universal human right.

Adopted: May 8, 2012

WILLIAM D. EUILLE MAYOR

ATTEST:

Jacqueline M. Henderson, MMC City Clerk