DATE: MAY 16, 2012

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

FROM: RASHAD M. YOUNG, CITY MANAGER

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

ISSUE: Resolution proposed by the Alexandria Human Rights Commission 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 City Council approve the attached resolution.

DISCUSSION: Members of the Alexandria Human Rights Commission, during the Commission’s April meeting, affirmed support for local law enforcement, but expressed outrage at the City of Sanford’s police department’s response to the shooting of 17-year-old Trayvon Martin, which was to invoke Florida’s controversial “Stand Your Ground” law. Commission members questioned the application of such a law in this context and discussed the need to address issues of racial profiling and vigilantism both locally and nationally. The Commission unanimously endorsed the submission of a resolution to the City Manager for consideration and presentation to City 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, among the first in the nation, 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 Alexandria’s Human Rights Commission expressed outrage at the City of Sanford’s police department’s response to the shooting, which was to invoke Florida’s controversial "Stand Your Ground" law, and

WHEREAS, the City of Alexandria’s Human Rights Commission questions the “Stand Your Ground” law as applied in this context, and

WHEREAS, the City of Alexandria’s Human Rights Commission affirms that, in the criminal justice system, police and prosecutors must properly balance the rights of victims with the rights of the accused, 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;
3. Rejects in principle “Stand Your Ground” laws; and

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

Adopted: May 22, 2012

WILLIAM D. EUILLE  MAYOR

ATTEST:

Jacqueline M. Henderson, MMC City Clerk
DATE: MAY 22, 2012

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

FROM: RASHAD M. YOUNG, CITY MANAGER

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

ISSUE: Resolution proposed by the Alexandria Human Rights Commission 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 City Council approve the attached resolution.

DISCUSSION: Members of the Alexandria Human Rights Commission, during the Commission's April meeting, affirmed support for local law enforcement, but expressed outrage at the City of Sanford's police department's response to the shooting of 17-year-old Trayvon Martin, which was to invoke Florida's controversial "Stand Your Ground" law. Commission members questioned the application of such a law in this context and discussed the need to address issues of racial profiling and vigilantism both locally and nationally. The Commission unanimously endorsed the submission of a resolution to the City Manager for consideration and presentation to City Council.

ATTACHMENT: Resolution

STAFF: Michele Evans, Deputy City Manager
Jean Kelleher Niebauer, Director, Office of Human Rights
RESOLUTION NO. ___

Denouncing the profiling of classes of persons protected under local and federal civil rights statutes 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, among the first in the nation, 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 discrimination that occur anywhere are unsettling to communities-at-large all around the world 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 in a gated community while he was residing in Sanford, Florida, and

WHEREAS, the City of Alexandria’s Human Rights Commission remains outraged at the preliminary response of the Sanford, Florida Police Department to George Zimmerman shooting Trayvon Martin, particularly applying Florida’s "Stand Your Ground" law and as a result, allowing Mr. Zimmerman to go free rather than be arrested and remain in police custody on the night of Mr. Martin’s death, and

WHEREAS, the City of Alexandria’s Human Rights Commission joins others around the world in questioning the applicability of the “Stand Your Ground” law in the case of the State of Florida versus George Zimmerman, and

WHEREAS, the City of Alexandria’s Human Rights Commission affirms that, in the criminal justice system, police and prosecutors, as officers of the court have an affirmative obligation to properly balance the rights of victims with the rights of the accused, 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 fair and proper administration of justice as relates to the death of Trayvon Martin; and

2. Denounces profiling of and vigilantism against any and all federally protected classes under civil rights laws 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. Prays that the appropriate authorities in the State of Florida properly limit the application of its “Stand Your Ground” law, to the extent that they find that unreasonable provocation by one claiming self-defense pursuant to “Stand Your Ground” waives the same if s/he is the preliminary aggressor in what turns out to be a fatality; and

4. Reaffirms that the pursuit of justice and equality must never be taken for granted and is a universal human right as set forth in the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights.

Adopted: May 22, 2012

WILLIAM D. EUILLE MAYOR

ATTEST:

Jacqueline M. Henderson, MMC City Clerk
COA Contact Us: Alexandria Human Rights Commission and Trayvon Martin Resolution

To The Honorable Mayor Euille and All Honored Councilmembers:

I can appreciate the Alexandria Human Rights Commission discussing this case as a means to fine tune their knowledge base to help them assess future local issues but, the thought of the Alexandria HRC hafting any unofficial or official resolution and to defend the Martin family is tantamount to gross negligence and is a unilateral, uneducated and unsupported decision.

While I'm sure the HRC is comprised of highly skilled and extremely loyal Alexandrians, they have in no way been afforded the evidence that will be presented at trial and, I'm assuming have had no personal contact with either George Zimmerman or the Martin
Family.

Drafting such a resolution as an official City Commission puts
the integrity of Alexandria and the integrity
of the HRC at serious
risk.

Our City Council and City Attorney must act expeditiously to put a
stop to this. Drafting such a resolution
without any first hand knowledge
is like claiming a dog is mean because it happens to be a Pit-Bull.

Without every ounce of trial evidence, the actions of the HRC are
simply nonsensical and highly inappropriate.

Sincerely,
Scott Gordon
It was the appropriate thing to do to table the Human Relations Committee proclamation regarding the Trayvon Martin incident. This is totally out of the scope of your jurisdiction -- the Council is elected to work for the betterment of Alexandria, not to be the arbiter of governmental action in this country or the world. What value does the Human Relations Committee add to Alexandria?? What good have they ever accomplished? Why do we waste money paying these people to snoop around getting into other peoples business? This is a free country in case you didn't know that and people are free to think and speak as they wish without worrying about retribution from the Thought Police. This function is more appropriate for a totalitarian state rather than our democratic country. these people need to mind their own business == the legal system in Florida is capable of dealing with the Trayvon Martin case and nothing you do or say will change anything. and Alexandria needs to get rid of a useless bureaucracy.
RESOLUTION NO. ___

Denouncing the profiling of classes of persons protected under local and federal civil rights statutes, 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, among the first in the nation, 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 at-large all around the world 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 in a gated community while he was residing in Sanford, Florida, reminding us all of the risks of Stand Your Ground laws and Vigilantism and

WHEREAS, the City of Alexandria's Human Rights Commission remains outraged at the preliminary response application of the Sanford, Florida Police Department to George Zimmerman shooting Trayvon Martin, particularly applying Florida's controversial "Stand Your Ground" law and as a result, allowing Mr. Zimmerman to go free rather than be arrested and remain in police custody on the night of Mr. Martin's death, and

WHEREAS, the City of Alexandria's Human Rights Commission joins others around the world in questioning the applicability of the "Stand Your Ground" law in the this case of the State of Florida versus George Zimmerman, and

WHEREAS, the City of Alexandria's Human Rights Commission affirms that, in the criminal justice system, police and prosecutors, as officers of the court have an affirmative obligation to must properly balance the rights of victims with the rights of the accused, and

WHEREAS, in the wake of the Trayvon Martin killing, this tragic situation has generated significant public outrage spread across the Nation, among all races, eliciting rallies of protest in various cities, including the City-of-concern in Alexandria and around the country about Stand Your Ground Laws, Racial Profiling and Vigilantism.

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

That the City Council of Alexandria, Virginia:

1. Supports the fair and proper administration of justice as relates to the death family of Trayvon Martin; and their fight for justice;
2. Denounces racial profiling of and vigilantism against any and all federally protected classes under civil rights laws, 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. Prays that the appropriate authorities in the State of Florida properly limit the application of its “Stand Your Ground” law, to the extent that they find that unreasonable provocation by one claiming self-defense pursuant to “Stand Your Ground” waives the same if/when the preliminary aggressor in what turns out to be a fatality, and

3. Rejects in principle “Stand Your Ground” laws; and

4. Reaffirms that the pursuit of justice and equality must never be taken for granted and is a universal human right as set forth in the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights.

Adopted: May 22, 2012

WILLIAM D. EUILLE MAYOR

ATTEST:

Jacqueline M. Henderson, MMC City Clerk