

# HUMAN RELATIONS INITIATIVE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## CITY OF SAN ANTONIO CITY COUNCIL DECLARING RACISM, A PUBLIC HEALTH CRISIS AND TO ESTABLISH STRONGER EFFORTS TO PROMOTE RACIAL EQUITY IN SAN ANTONIO

The Human Relations Initiative, Inc., had the privilege of providing public comments today during the City Council Meeting in support of a resolution introduced for consideration by Councilmember Jada Andrews-Sullivan; a resolution declaring racism a public health crisis and to establish stronger efforts to promote racial equity in San Antonio. An excerpt of the resolution stated the following:

“WHEREAS, the San Antonio community has experienced a history of structural, institutional, interpersonal, and individual racist practices and laws including slavery, Jim Crow, segregation, and redlining, which provided preferential opportunity to some and barriers to Black/African Americans and other people of color; and these racist practices and laws resulted in unequal educational attainment, health outcomes, housing status, economic security, and wealth building opportunities for Black/African American and other people of color not only in their lifetimes but across subsequent generations;”

The resolution went on to fully express and document numerous historical examples of racism experienced by various groups of people of color in our region. Additionally, there was reference made to the City of San Antonio Metro Health Department’s establishment of the Office of Health Equity in 2017, and a 2019 Racial Equity Indicator Report, which provided metrics specific to Bexar County and the City of San Antonio. Human Relations Initiative, Inc. appreciates the City of San Antonio’s complete compilation of supporting evidence which provides documentation specific to the reality, effects, and impacts of racism and inequity within our community.

**The majority of the City Council fully supported the resolution. The voting was as follows: 8 ayes, 0 nays, 1 abstain, 1 not present; therefore, resulting in unanimous adoption.** Our sincerest thanks to Councilmember Jada Andrews-Sullivan, Assistant City Managers David McCary and Dr. Colleen Bridger, Chief Equity Officer Zan Gibbs, Community Health and Equity Committee Chair Ana Sandoval and all Committee Members, Mayor Nirenberg, City Manager Walsh, and respectfully, all remaining City Council Members and staffers. Thanks to all for being outspoken, providing appropriate leadership, and heartfelt humanity.

Herbert Nance, Human Relations Initiative, Inc. President/CEO stated the following: “My personally painful truth is I too have directly experienced and been a victim of numerous forms of discrimination throughout my life. However, I have been racially discriminated against in every state of my life. While that might sound unbelievable, I acknowledge 15 life changing moments of individual, interpersonal, institutional, structural, and systemic racism in my life. The decision taken by the Council today, gives us progressive optimism for the City of San Antonio, Bexar County, and the surrounding cities and counties that make up the region. From genuine words, to methodical conversations, tangible steps, and deliberate actions.”

For those who are marginalized; inequality must be acknowledged and both historical and current racial and discriminatory actions must be admitted. The goal must be for all minorities to truly be respected by all, treated as equals, included as their lives matter too, and recognized as worthy and valuable individuals of the human race!

Human Relations Initiative, Inc. will continue advocating for racial justice, furthering promotion of racial equity, and working to dismantle and eliminate racism in all its forms. We remain committed to ensuring human rights are no longer dismissed as an unattainable but are instead active components of the current reform movement! Furthermore, we look forward to being included in the ongoing and forthcoming efforts by the City of San Antonio, for collaboration with the City in support of its citizens and all within the region.

**“There is no vaccine for racism, we’ve got to do the work,” Senator and Vice-Presidential Nominee Kamala Harris.**

For more information, to review resources, or to request assistance; please visit <https://humanri.org/>.

Together, we can be collaborative champions of diversity, equity, and inclusion for all people.

### MISSION STATEMENT

Human Relations Initiative, Inc. is a non-partisan organization which advocates for cultural social transformation by advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion through awareness, education, and dialogue.