

WHEREAS, the topics of immigration reform, border security, and state and federal cooperation on immigration are concerns that are of great importance to state and local government entities of both sides of the United States-Mexico border; and,

WHEREAS, the federal government is currently making historic strides to fixing an immigration system that has long been broken; and,

WHEREAS, every social sector stands to benefit from a reform of our federal immigration system; and

WHEREAS, The United States of America is a land of immigrants, and the migration of people and families from all corners of the world has enriched the American culture; and,

WHEREAS, the El Paso/Juarez Community understands that the border has joined our community both socially and economically; and,

WHEREAS, in addition to the cultural and social riches the nation receives through our border, our ports of entry drive regional and national economic development approaching \$500 billion in trade and one in 24 American jobs; and,

WHEREAS, our nation's progress is rooted in values that promote a diversified economy, protect family unity, and opportunity and liberty for all sectors of our society;

WHEREAS, our border enforcement apparatus has reached and surpassed all benchmarks proposed in previous immigration reform discussions including increases in border agents between ports of entry to 22,000, increased border barriers such as 650 total miles of fencing, increased consequences and prosecutions for unauthorized entry, as well as "operational control" of the border by spending \$18 billion last year alone, more than all other federal law enforcement agencies combined including the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives and the Federal Bureau of Investigation;

WHEREAS, the consequences of this 'enforcement first' approach has resulted in a choking effect on regional economic development, civil rights violations, migrant deaths;

WHEREAS, Washington must make significant investments in and focus on commerce and legal migration in addition to enforcement of immigration laws;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT HEREBY:

RESOLVED, that El Paso County, support a reasonable and comprehensive approach to reforming the now broken immigration system;

RESOLVED, that El Paso County supports added investment in infrastructure and technology as well as adequate staffing ports of entry in order to keep up with the pace of the expansion of bilateral trade or the population growth of the border region;

RESOLVED, that civil and human rights are deeply rooted in the American fabric and must be instilled in all elements of our enforcement apparatus to ensure the humanity of an individual must be recognized and respected.

RESOLVED, that it is not practical to deport the 11 million undocumented immigrants living within our borders, but that citizenship should be earned by following an established pathway to citizenship.

RESOLVED, that this path to citizenship not be conditioned upon more of the same border enforcement strategies that would only add extra obstacles to full integration.

RESOLVED, that the immigration system be streamlined to be more efficient in order to attract the best minds to America and encourage foreign graduate students in high demand fields like math, science, and technology to stay after graduation.

RESOLVED, pass legislation that strengthens prohibitions against racial profiling and inappropriate use of force, enhance the training of border patrol agents, increase independent oversight, and create a mechanism to ensure a meaningful opportunity for border communities to share input, including critiques.

RESOLVED, that legislation reduce backlogs in the family and employment visa categories so that future immigrants view our future legal immigration system as the exclusive means for entry into the United States.

RESOLVED, that future waves of illegal immigration be prevented by creating a humane and effective system for these immigrant workers to enter the country and find employment without seeking the aid of human traffickers.

RESOLVED, that legislation provide businesses with the ability to hire lower-skilled workers in a timely manner when Americans are unavailable or unwilling to fill those jobs while protecting workers by ensuring strong labor protections.

RESOLVED, that immigration reform provide young people who entered the United States as minor children not knowingly violating immigration laws should be entitled to an expedited pathway to citizenship through military service or the attainment of higher education.

RESOLVED, that the bi-partisan group of U.S. Senators who rose above the divisive politics of the day to create an agreement in principle should be commended for their work.

RESOLVED, that El Paso County will provide input and support legislation that is effective, responsible, humanitarian and not an encumbrance to international commerce.

SIGNED, this 4th day of February 2013

Commissioner Carlos Leon, Pct. 1

Commissioner Sergio Lewis, Pct. 2

Commissioner Vincent M. Perez, Pct. 3

Commissioner Daniel R. Haggerty, Pct. 4

*Veronica Escobar
County Judge*