



**CITY OF SALINAS
COUNCIL STAFF REPORT**

DATE: SEPTEMBER 26, 2023
DEPARTMENT: CITY COUNCIL
FROM: CHRISTOPHER A. CALLIHAN, CITY ATTORNEY
TITLE: A RESOLUTION DENOUNCING FLORIDA GOVERNOR RON DESANTIS'S VISIT TO SALINAS, CALIFORNIA

RECOMMENDED MOTION:

Consider approving a Resolution condemning and denouncing Florida Governor Ron DeSantis's actions and denouncing his planned visit to Salinas, California.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

This Resolution was requested by Council members Rocha and Sandoval in response to a planned visit to Salinas by Ron DeSantis on September 28, 2023.

CEQA CONSIDERATION:

Not a Project. The City of Salinas has determined that the proposed action is not a project as defined by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (CEQA Guidelines Section 15378).

STRATEGIC PLAN INITIATIVE:

This Resolution is consistent with the City Council's goal of an Effective and Culturally Responsive Government.

DEPARTMENTAL COORDINATION:

The City Attorney's Office prepared this Report and Resolution at the request of Council members Rocha and Sandoval.

FISCAL AND SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT:

The Resolution does not have an impact on the City's General Fund.

ATTACHMENTS:

Resolution
Assembly Concurrent Resolution 113

RESOLUTION NO. _____ (N.C.S.)

A RESOLUTION CONDEMNING AND DENOUNCING FLORIDA GOVERNOR RON DESANTIS'S ACTIONS AND DENOUNCING HIS VISIT TO SALINAS, CALIFORNIA

WHEREAS, the City of Salinas City Council has made clear that Salinas is home to and welcoming of people of every sex, race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, mental or physical disability, sexual orientation, and gender identity; and

WHEREAS, while Florida Governor Ron DeSantis was elected to be Governor of Florida and to represent the needs of all Floridians, regardless of race, ethnicity, gender identity or political affiliation, Governor DeSantis has used his position of power, and his campaign for President of the United States, to target marginalized communities and forcefully impose his personal ideology on to Florida's citizens; and

WHEREAS, according to his campaign for President of the United States, "Team DeSantis," Governor Ron DeSantis is scheduled to participate in a campaign fundraiser event (a "Roundtable Brunch") on September 28, 2023, in Salinas, California; and

WHEREAS, on August 15, 2023, California Assembly Member Low (District 26) introduced Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 113 calling for a federal investigation and accountability for Governor DeSantis and the State of Florida's "Unauthorized Alien Transport Program," pursuant to which on June 2, 2023, and June 5, 2023, two planes carrying 36 migrant individuals arrived in the city of Sacramento without warning. Governor DeSantis's office confirmed that they were responsible for sending the planes of migrants to California; and

WHEREAS, through the Unauthorized Alien Transport Program, 48 migrants were flown from Texas to Martha's Vineyard, which activity is outside the intended scope of the Program (www.cnn.com/2022/10/08/us/florida-migrants-marthas-vineyard-state-documents-contractors/index.html); and

WHEREAS, Florida Senate Bill 1718 authorized an additional \$12 million to the Program, prioritizing removing migrants instead of providing resources for undocumented migrants (flsenate.gov/Session/Bill/2023/1718); and

WHEREAS, Governor DeSantis signed into law the "Parental Rights in Education Bill," known as the "Don't Say Gay" bill, which bans classroom instruction regarding gender or sexual orientation that are not "age appropriate or developmentally appropriate" (flsenate.gov/Committees/bills/summaries/2022/html/2825); and

WHEREAS, under Governor DeSantis's discretion, the Parental Rights in Education Bill was expanded to include all of K-12 in its ban on classroom discussions of sexual orientation and gender, despite there being an estimated 114,000 LGBTQ+ minors that would benefit from learning about concepts that normalize their existence (time.com/6273364/florida-dont-say-gay-expansion); and

WHEREAS, Governor DeSantis signed into law House Bill 1069, which restricts sex education to grades 6-12 and censors what must be taught. The sex education curriculum in Florida can no longer discuss transgender or nonbinary people, will prioritize abstinence-only education, gives no exceptions to teacher for unforeseen situations, such as answering students' questions regarding their menstrual cycles, and emphasizes monogamous heterosexual marriage (www.flsenate.gov/Session/Bill/2023/1069); and

WHEREAS, Governor DeSantis's education policies have extended to the history of racism, as it is now illegal for public schools to teach the truth about American slavery, segregation, and systemic racism; and

WHEREAS, Governor DeSantis has forced public schools to teach a new history curriculum that downplays the atrocities of slavery and the impacts it continues to have on African Americans, going so far as forcing schools to teach students that “ ‘slaves developed skills’ that could be used for ‘personal benefit’.” (<https://www.cbsnews.com/news/floridas-new-education-standards-says-slavery-had-personal-benefits/>); and

WHEREAS, Governor DeSantis signed into law House Bill 7, the “Individual Freedom” bill otherwise known as the “Stop WOKE Act,” which requires the revision of African American history in Florida public schools and prohibits any education that teaches people can be privileged or unconsciously bigoted because of race and gender (<https://www.flsenate.gov/Session/Bill/2022/7>); and

WHEREAS, Governor DeSantis signed into law Senate Bill 266 which bans general education courses in publicly funded universities from teaching about systemic racism, sexism, or oppression, makes it easier for faculty to be fired, and bans the funding of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) programs (flsenate.gov/Session/Bill/2023/266); and

WHEREAS, the education censorship laws signed into law by Governor DeSantis has caused a spike in book banning. From June to December of 2022, Florida had 13 school districts ban books, the most of any state. In total, 357 books were banned in Florida during that time period (pen.org/report/banned-in-the-usa-state-laws-supercharge-book-suppression-in-schools/); and

WHEREAS, Governor DeSantis has explicitly targeted transgender students by requesting Florida universities to report how many of their students sought and received gender-affirming care. Sixteen attorney generals from across the country condemned the request and declared the request “may be intended to intimidate, and will actually intimidate, university administrators and health care providers and chill vulnerable students...from accessing necessary medical care (https://ag.ny.gov/sites/default/files/letters/desantis_letter_re_gender-affirming_care_at_fl_universities_03.03.23.pdf); and

WHEREAS, Governor DeSantis has criminalized members from the LGBTQIA+ community expressing themselves and their identity. He signed into law House Bill 1521, the “Facility Requirements Based on Sex” law, which makes it illegal for transgender people to use bathrooms that match their gender identity (flsenate.gov/Session/Bill/2023/1521); and

WHEREAS, Governor DeSantis signed into law Senate Bill 254, the “Treatments for Sex Reassignment” law, which bans minors from receiving gender-affirming care and imposes numerous restrictions on gender-affirming care for adults (flsenate.gov/Session/Bill/2023/254); and

WHEREAS, Governor DeSantis signed into law Senate Bill 264 that “limits land purchases by residents of countries of concern” including China, Russia, Iran, North Korea, Cuba, Venezuela, and Syria (<https://flsenate.gov/Session/Bill/2023/264>); and

WHEREAS, on May 20, 2023, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People issued a travel advisory, warning people of color to both leave and to not visit the state of Florida “in direct response to Governor Ron DeSantis’ aggressive attempts to erase Black history and to restrict diversity, equity, and inclusion programs in Florida schools (<https://naacp.org/articles/naacp-issues-travel-advisory-florida#:~:text=The%20travel%20advisory%20comes%20in,of%20color%20and%20LGBTQ%2B%20individuals>); and

WHEREAS,, Equality Florida (LGBT advocacy), Human Rights Campaign, and League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) released a statement saying “Since he took office, Governor DeSantis has weaponized his position to weave bigotry, hate, and discrimination into public law for his own political gain (<https://www.hrc.org/press-releases/nations-largest-lgbtq-advocacy-group-joins-equality-florida-in-issuing-updated-florida-travel-advisory>): and

WHEREAS, Governor DeSantis signed Senate Bill 1718, which classifies traveling into Florida with an undocumented immigrant as “human smuggling” which is punishable in Florida as a third degree felony, regardless of any familial or spousal relations with that person (flsenate.gov/Session/Bill/2023/1718); and

WHEREAS, Senate Bill 1718 also makes it more difficult for undocumented immigrants to gain employment. The law forces employers to verify employee eligibility for all new employees and fines any noncompliant business \$1,000 per day, and charges undocumented immigrants using false identification with a third-degree felony (flsenate.gov/Session/Bill/2023/1718).

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF SALINAS that the City Council strongly denounces and condemns the actions of Governor Ron DeSantis, including:

1. His treatment of undocumented immigrants by criminalizing their existence and using state resources to remove them to places throughout the country;
2. His targeting of the LGBTQIA+ community by imposing bans on their expression, erasing their existence from public school education, and making it nearly impossible for transgender people to exist; and
3. His use his power and influence as Governor of Florida to dehumanize racial minority groups through the use of hateful rhetoric and policies that target specific racial groups, and revisionist history in schools that ignore the legacy of racial oppression; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Council of Salinas condemns Governor DeSantis's visiting the city of Salinas, California.

PASSED AND APPROVED this 26th day of September, 2023, by the following vote:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

ABSTAIN:

APPROVED:

Kimbley Craig, Mayor

ATTEST:

Patricia M. Barajas, City Clerk