



BROWARD COUNTY CODE OF ETHICS ADVISORY OPINION

To: Mayor Angelo Castillo

From: Samuel S. Goren, City Attorney

Date: October 8, 2024

Re: City of Pembroke Pines (“City”) / Code of Ethics – Advisory Opinion

I. ISSUE AND FACTS PRESENTED

In your capacity as Mayor, you have been invited by the Combat Antisemitism Movement (“CAM”) to attend the 2024 Mayors’ Summit Against Antisemitism taking place from December 11-13, 2024 (the “Summit”). All travel, meals and accomodation expenses will be paid by the Combat Hate Foundation (the “Foundation”), a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization. The Summit will include keynote speakers, panels and workshop events, networking opportunities, and community events.

Upon receipt of the invitation, you inquired further of the CAM as to whether the Summit is intended to help mayors train to fight antisemitism. In response to your inquiry, the CAM Government Projects and Data Manager confirmed that training is a key component of the Summit, stating that the “Summit will feature interactive sessions and workshops for Mayors to learn about effective policies to combat antisemitism from experts and case studies.” A copy of the email exchange between your office and the CAM related to this training inquiry is attached hereto as Exhibit “A.” You have further indicated that such training for public officials is particularly important at the current moment given the recent rise in antisemitism; and that you seek to ensure that you and the City are properly equipped to address the issue in Pembroke Pines should the need arise.

To the best of your knowledge, neither the CAM, nor the Foundation, are lobbyists, contracts or vendors of the City of Pembroke Pines.

You have inquired as to whether the Broward County Code of Ethics for Elected Officials (“Code of Ethics”) permits you to accept the invitation to the Summit.

II. ANSWER

For the reasons set forth herein, the Code of Ethics **does not** prohibit you from accepting the CAM's invitation to the Summit with expenses paid by the Foundation. The gift restrictions set forth in the Code of Ethics include a specific exception for "training, including the payment or reimbursement of expenses incurred in connection therewith, provided the training relates to the Elected Official's public service." Since the Summit is a training opportunity for elected officials, you are permitted to accept the invitation and attend the event, in accordance with the Code of Ethics. *Section 1-19(C)(1)(e), Broward County Code of Ordinances.*

III. ANALYSIS

The Code of Ethics expressly incorporates the definition of "gift" from Ch. 112, F.S. Section 112.312(12)(a), F.S., defines "gift" to specifically include "tickets to events," "transportation" and "food or beverage." Therefore, the invitation to the Summit, including travel and lodging, registration and other related expenses are considered a "gifts" under both the Broward County Code of Ethics and Ch. 112, F.S.

The Code of Ethics, which is more restrictive than state law, establishes the following three (3) categories of gifts:

- 1) Gifts from lobbyists, vendors and contractors;
- 2) Official capacity gifts; and
- 3) Personal (nonofficial) capacity gifts.

The invitation to the Summit was not offered by a lobbyist, vendor or contractor, as those terms are defined in the Code. However, the invitation to attend the event by the CAM was extended to you in your official capacity as Mayor of the City. Therefore, the invitation, including all related travel, lodging meals and other expenses would be considered "official capacity" gifts pursuant to the Code.

The Code of Ethics provides that "Elected Officials may accept gifts from other sources [not lobbyists, vendors or contractors] given to them in their official capacity, where not otherwise inconsistent with the provisions of Ch. 112, Part III, F.S., up to a maximum value of \$50.00 per occurrence." While the actual value of the invitation to the Summit, including the travel, lodging, meals and registration is unknown, it would presumably far exceed the \$50.00 limit on official capacity gifts.

However, the Code of Ethics further states, "When not otherwise permitted by the part (c)(1), 'Acceptance of Gifts,' the following items may be accepted to the full extent permissible under state law:

...

2. Training, including the payment or reimbursement of expenses incurred in connection therewith, provided the training relates to the Elected Official's public service. The receipt of such training is deemed to directly benefit the public on which behalf the Elected Official serves.”

On or about July 22, 2024, you received an invitation to the Summit from the CAM through its Chief Government Affairs Officer, Lisa Katz. Upon receipt of the invitation, you met with the City Attorney's Office to discuss the possibility of attending the Summit, including any issues under the Code of Ethics or state law. On September 7, 2024, you requested your administrative assistant to seek additional information from the CAM as it relates to training opportunities associated with the Summit. On September 11, 2024, the CAM Government Projects and Data Manager, Arthur Dubov, reconfirmed the training opportunities associated with the Summit, stating “the Mayors Summit will feature interactive sessions and workshops for Mayors to learn about effective policies to combat antisemitism from experts and case studies.” A copy of this email exchange is attached as Exhibit “A.”

As noted, the Code of Ethics includes a specific exception to the gift limitations for training opportunities associated with an Elected Official's public service, including the payment of expenses associated with such training. The City of Pembroke Pines has a long history of working to combat antisemitism, including through the adoption of Resolution No. 3698, dated June 3, 2020. A copy of the resolution is attached hereto as Exhibit “B.” You have also indicated that attendance at the Summit will strengthen the City's ability to pursue this mission.

The additional due diligence and information provided by the CAM confirms the training opportunity associated with attendance at the Summit. Further more, there is no provision in state law that would otherwise limit your ability to accept the invitation, subject to the appropriate disclosure. In our opinion, the invitation to attend the Summit, including all related expenses, relates to your public service and falls within the training exception set forth in the Code of Ethics. Therefore, you are legally permitted under the Code of Ethics to accept the invitation and attend the Summit.

On a related note, you were similarly invited by the CAM in May 2024 to participate in a solidarity mission to Israel. While you were unable to join the mission due to scheduling conflicts, you may recall at the time that the City Attorney's Office raised concerns about that invitation in the context of the official capacity gift limitations set forth in the Code of Ethics. The additional information you have provided from the CAM confirming the training opportunities associated with the Summit, in our opinion, distinguish this latest invitation from the invitation to participate in the Israeli mission. In other words, the affirmative training opportunities associated with the Summit, which have been expressly reconfirmed by the event's organizers, support our conclusion that the Summit invitation falls within the training exception set forth in the Code. Importantly, the City Attorney's Office was not provided with similar training information for the Israeli mission opportunity.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, to the extent that you do choose to accept the invitation and attend the Summit, the City Attorney's Office recommends that you complete and file a Form 9 quarterly gift disclosure and report the item as a permissible gift pursuant to Sec. 112.3148, F.S.

I. CONCLUSION

For the reasons set forth herein, it is the opinion of the City Attorney's Office that the invitation to the Summit, including all related expenses, falls within the training exception from the limitations on gifts set forth in the Broward County Code of Ethics. Therefore, you are legally permitted to accept the invitation to the Summit, subject to the appropriate Form 9 disclosure pursuant to Sec. 112.3148, F.S.

This advisory opinion is issued pursuant to Section 1-19(c)(8) of the Broward County Code of Ordinances and may be relied upon by the individual who made the request. This analysis is limited solely to the facts presented. Within fifteen (15) days of receiving this opinion, a copy must be sent in a searchable "pdf" format to ethicsadvisoryopinions@broward.org for inclusion in the searchable database of advisory opinions maintained by the County.

Please contact our office if there is any additional information that we can provide.

Subject: PP/Mayor's Against Anti-Semitism--Beverly Hills Event, December, 2024

From: Castillo, Angelo <acastillo@ppines.com>
Sent: Wednesday, September 11, 2024 3:19 PM
To: Richards, Karen <krichards@ppines.com>; Samuel S. Goren <SGoren@gorencherof.com>
Cc: Jacob G. Horowitz <JHorowitz@gorencherof.com>
Subject: Re: PP/Mayor's Against Anti-Semitism--Beverly Hills Event, December, 2024

Thank you

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From: Richards, Karen <krichards@ppines.com>
Sent: Wednesday, September 11, 2024 12:02:41 PM
To: Castillo, Angelo <acastillo@ppines.com>; Sam Goren <sgoren@gorencherof.com>
Cc: Jacob G. Horowitz <JHorowitz@gorencherof.com>
Subject: RE: PP/Mayor's Against Anti-Semitism--Beverly Hills Event, December, 2024

Mayor:

The answer to your question “ Let’s ask them if their event is intended to help Mayor train to fight antisemitism. Let’s get this straightened out. “ is below.

Karen Richards

From: Mayors Summit Against Antisemitism <summit@combatantisemitism.org>
Sent: Wednesday, September 11, 2024 11:47 AM
To: Richards, Karen <krichards@ppines.com>
Subject: Re: Mayors Summit Against Antisemitism: Travel Information

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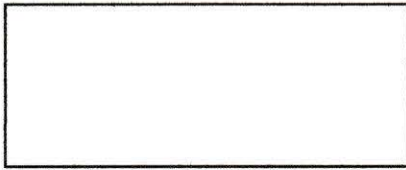
Good morning Karen,

Yes, the Mayors Summit will feature interactive sessions and workshops for Mayors to learn about effective policies to combat antisemitism from experts and case studies. We will be happy to send along a draft of the program once it is available.

Please let me know if you have any more questions for us.

Best,
Arthur

Arthur Dubov
Government Projects & Data Manager
[Combat Antisemitism Movement \(CAM\)](https://www.combatantisemitism.org)
arthur.dubov@combatantisemitism.org
+1 347 488 6747



On Mon, Sep 9, 2024 at 8:53 AM Richards, Karen <krichards@ppines.com> wrote:
Good Morning Arthur:

Mayor Castillo would like to know if the Mayors Summit Against Antisemitism intends to help Mayors train to fight antisemitism.

Please advise, thank you.

From: Castillo, Angelo <acastillo@ppines.com>
Sent: Saturday, September 7, 2024 1:11 PM
To: Richards, Karen <krichards@ppines.com>; Sam Goren <sgoren@gorencherof.com>
Cc: Jacob G. Horowitz <JHorowitz@gorencherof.com>
Subject: Re: PP/Mayor's Against Anti-Semitism--Beverly Hills Event, December, 2024

Karen,

Let's ask them if their event is intended to help Mayor train to fight antisemitism. Let's get this straightened out.

AC

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From: Richards, Karen <krichards@ppines.com>
Sent: Saturday, September 7, 2024 1:09:19 PM
To: Sam Goren <sgoren@gorencherof.com>
Cc: Castillo, Angelo <acastillo@ppines.com>; Jacob G. Horowitz <JHorowitz@gorencherof.com>
Subject: RE: PP/Mayor's Against Anti-Semitism--Beverly Hills Event, December, 2024

Good afternoon:

Below is the original (July 22) e-mail Mayor Castillo receive regarding the 2024 Mayors Summit Against Antisemitism. I have also provided below an e-mail from the FLM dated 8/30/2024 regarding the same.

Please let me know if you need anything else.

Thank you, Karen

<https://mayors.combatantisemitism.org/summit>

From: Mayors Summit Against Antisemitism <lisa@combatantisemitism.org>
Sent: Monday, July 22, 2024 8:17:06 AM
To: Castillo, Angelo <acastillo@ppines.com>
Subject: Invitation to Attend the 2024 Mayors Summit Against Antisemitism

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Dear Mayor Castillo,

As the Chief Government Affairs Officer of the Combat Antisemitism Movement (CAM) and a former elected Town Supervisor, I am honored to invite you to attend the [2024 Mayors Summit Against Antisemitism](#), taking place this year in **Beverly Hills, California, on December 11-13**.

This impactful event, hosted by the **Combat Antisemitism Movement** and chaired by **Lester Friedman, Mayor of Beverly Hills**, will unite leaders, policymakers, and advocates from across the United States and Canada in a collective effort to combat antisemitism and promote a society of tolerance and respect.

Registration for the Summit is available [HERE](#). **All travel, meal, and accommodation expenses will be paid by the Combat Hate Foundation, a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization.**

Antisemitism is an urgent and growing threat that endangers not only Jewish communities, but also the fundamental values of our diverse and democratic society. Mayors have a unique ability to proactively confront Jew-hatred at the local level, where it is most acutely felt. Your leadership on this issue will set a powerful example for your constituents.

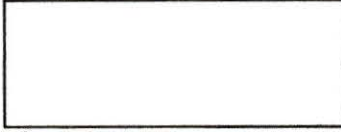
The Mayors Summit will feature:

- **Inspirational Keynotes:** Hear from renowned thought leaders and change-makers who will share their insights and personal journeys in the fight against antisemitism.
- **Dynamic Panels and Workshops:** Engage in deep-dive sessions with experts to explore practical solutions and actionable strategies tailored to your municipality's unique circumstances.
- **Exclusive Networking Opportunities:** Connect with fellow mayors, civic leaders, and engaged advocates to share best practices, build alliances, and collaborate on impactful initiatives.

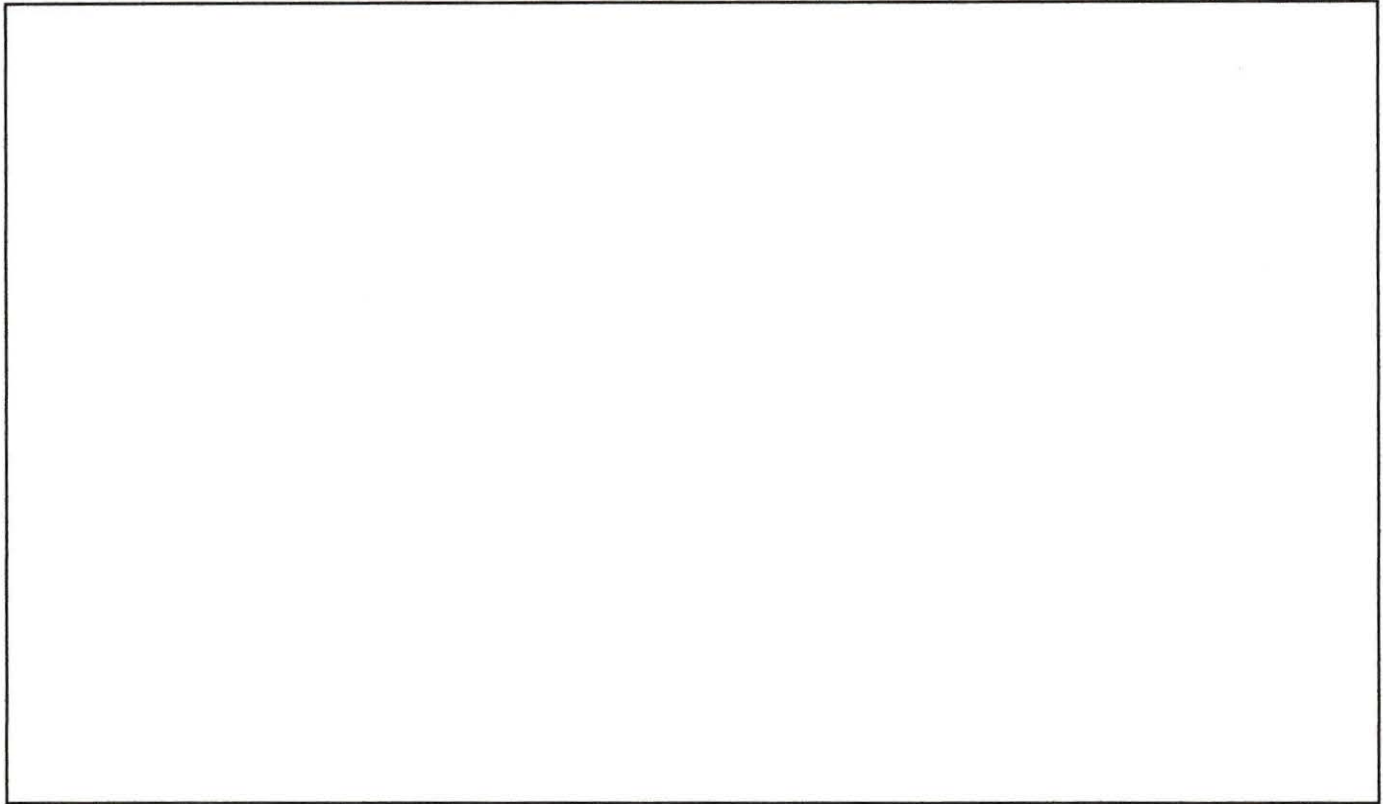
- **Community Events:** Participate in special events designed to celebrate diversity and foster understanding in our communities.

I sincerely hope that you will join us for the Mayors Summit in December. Please contact me with any questions at: lisa@combatantisemitism.org. See you in Beverly Hills!

Best,



Lisa Katz, Esq.
Chief Government Affairs Officer
[Combat Antisemitism Movement](http://CombatAntisemitismMovement.org)
lisa@combatantisemitism.org
+1-917-696-0029



From: Florida League of Mayors <jbranch@flcities.com>
Sent: Friday, August 30, 2024 12:15 PM
To: Richards, Karen <krichards@ppines.com>
Subject: 2024 Mayors Summit Against Antisemitism

This sender is trusted.



2024 Mayors Summit Against Antisemitism

2024 Mayors Summit Against Antisemitism

Beverly Hills, California

December 11-13, 2024

Hosted by the Combat Antisemitism Movement (CAM) and Chaired by Lester Friedman, Mayor of Beverly Hills.

Antisemitism is a growing concern that impacts the very fabric of our communities, and your leadership is crucial in our collective effort to combat this issue. The summit will bring together mayors, policymakers, and advocates from across North America to share insights, strategies, and best practices to enhance your efforts in creating safe communities free from hate.

Highlights of the summit include:

- Inspirational Keynotes from prominent thought leaders and activists.

- Dynamic Panels and Workshops focused on practical solutions and innovative approaches.
- Networking Opportunities to connect with fellow mayors and leaders.

[Learn More and Register](#)

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Karen Richards

Executive Assistant to Mayor Angelo Castillo
City of Pembroke Pines
601 City Center Way
4th Floor
Pembroke Pines, FL 33025
954-450-1020 (office)
E-mail Krichards@ppines.com
www.ppines.com

From: Samuel S. Goren <SGoren@gorencherof.com>

Sent: Friday, September 6, 2024 7:14 AM

To: Richards, Karen <krichards@ppines.com>; Lakosky, Julie <jlakosky@ppines.com>; Dawson, Michelle <mdawson@ppines.com>

Cc: Castillo, Angelo <acastillo@ppines.com>; Jacob G. Horowitz <JHorowitz@gorencherof.com>

Subject: PP/Mayor's Against Anti-Semitism--Beverly Hills Event, December, 2024

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Karen,

Good Friday morning. Hope you and your family will enjoy a good and restful weekend.

At your convenience, would you kindly send to us the brochure and related documents associated with the invitation recently received by Mayor Castillo for the above-referenced event for our further CAO review.

Thx in advance.

Regards,

Samuel S. Goren



**GOREN CHEROF
DOODY & EZROL PA**
ATTORNEYS AT LAW

3099 East Commercial Boulevard, Suite 200

Fort Lauderdale, Florida 33308

Telephone: (954) 771-4500 x 5022 | (561) 276-9400 x 5022 | Fax: (954) 771-4923

Email: SGoren@gorencherof.com | www.GorenCherof.com

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PROPOSED RESOLUTION NO. 2020-R-19

RESOLUTION NO. 3698

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF PEMBROKE PINES, FLORIDA, DENOUNCING ANTISEMITISM, ANTI-ASIAN BIGOTRY, AND ALL HATEFUL SPEECH, VIOLENT ACTION AND THE SPREAD OF MISINFORMATION RELATED TO COVID-19; JOINING OTHER CITIES, COUNTIES AND STATES ACROSS THE COUNTRY IN AFFIRMING ITS COMMITMENT TO THE SAFETY AND WELL-BEING OF ALL COMMUNITY MEMBERS; CONTINUING ITS EFFORTS TO PROTECT RESIDENTS, TARGETS AND VICTIMS OF HATE; PLEDGING TO SUPPORT THE RIGHTS OF ALL PEOPLE; URGING RESIDENTS TO JOIN THE CITY OF PEMBROKE PINES IN CALLING ATTENTION TO THESE HARMS AND DENOUNCE HATE; PROVIDING FOR CONFLICTS; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

WHEREAS, since the outbreak of the COVID-19 virus, more than 5,034,458 cases and more than 329,186 deaths have been confirmed worldwide as of May 21, 2020, according to the Johns Hopkins University Coronavirus Resource Center, and according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 1,528,235 cases and 91,664 deaths have been reported in the United States as of May 21, 2020; and

WHEREAS, COVID-19 will not be stopped by political boundaries and was not created or caused by any race, nationality or ethnicity, and the World Health Organization has cautioned against using geographic descriptors that can fuel ethnic and racial discrimination; and

WHEREAS, COVID-19 has infected people from all racial, national and ethnic backgrounds; and

Exhibit "B"

PROPOSED RESOLUTION NO. 2020-R-19

RESOLUTION NO. 3698

WHEREAS, the City of Pembroke Pines is fully committed to the safety, security, and equal treatment of its residents as it confronts the COVID-19 pandemic; and

WHEREAS, each individual has the ability to promote inclusiveness, celebrate diversity, support all fellow community members, prevent the spread of misinformation, and reject hate and bias in all forms; and

WHEREAS, hate crimes, discrimination and aggression against Asians and Jews are on the rise throughout the country as these groups are being blamed for the COVID-19 outbreak and spread; and

WHEREAS, as our history has shown, times of great fear, uncertainty and unrest can lead to the demonization, blaming, and scapegoating of groups as the "other;" and

WHEREAS, extremists are taking advantage of COVID-19 to spread their hateful ideologies, including antisemitism, racism, Islamophobia, and Sinophobia; and

WHEREAS, amid the growing spread of COVID-19, there are surging reports of bias-motivated incidents targeting members of the Asian and Pacific Islander community in the United States; and

WHEREAS, COVID-19 is a public health issue, not a racial, religious or ethnic one, and the deliberate use of terms such as "Chinese virus" or "Kung Fu virus" to describe COVID-19 only encourages hate crimes and incidents against

PROPOSED RESOLUTION NO. 2020-R-19

RESOLUTION NO. 3698

Asians and further spreads misinformation at a time when communities should be working together to get through this crisis; and

WHEREAS, the Jewish community has been targeted with blame, hate, anti-Semitic tropes and conspiracy theories about their creating, spreading and profiting from COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, to target and stigmatize specific communities for the COVID-19 outbreak and world-wide spread creates an inexcusable risk to all community members; and

WHEREAS, it is critical that the City of Pembroke Pines take leadership and stand in solidarity with its Asian and Jewish communities to send a message that discriminatory and hate-motivated behavior or violence will not be tolerated; and

WHEREAS, all persons are encouraged to report any such anti-Semitic, discriminatory or racist incidents to the proper authorities for investigation; and

WHEREAS, the City of Pembroke Pines wishes to affirm its commitment to the well-being and safety of its Asian and Jewish community members and ensure they know they are not alone and that the City of Pembroke Pines is committed to ending the spread of all forms of hate and bigotry.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF PEMBROKE PINES, FLORIDA, THAT:

PROPOSED RESOLUTION NO. 2020-R-19

RESOLUTION NO. 3698

SECTION 6. The City of Pembroke Pines, urges residents to join in calling attention to these harms and denouncing hate to help keep us all safe during this unprecedented pandemic and beyond.

SECTION 7. All resolutions inconsistent or in conflict herewith shall be and are hereby repealed insofar as there is conflict or inconsistency.

SECTION 8. If any section, sentence, clause, or phrase of this Resolution is held to be invalid or unconstitutional by any court of competent jurisdiction, then said holding shall in no way affect the validity of the remaining portions of this Resolution.

SECTION 9. This Resolution shall become effective upon its passage and adoption by the City Commission.

PROPOSED RESOLUTION NO. 2020-R-19

RESOLUTION NO. 3698

PASSED AND ADOPTED BY THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF
PEMBROKE PINES, FLORIDA, THIS 3RD DAY OF JUNE, 2020.

CITY OF PEMBROKE PINES, FLORIDA

ATTEST:

BY:

[Signature of Marlene Graham]

[Signature of Mayor Frank C. Ortis]

MARLENE GRAHAM
CITY CLERK

6/9/2020

MAYOR FRANK C. ORTIS

ORTIS AYE

SIPLE AYE

SCHWARTZ AYE

GOOD AYE

CHANZES AYE

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

[Signature of David D. Jones]

OFFICE OF THE
CITY ATTORNEY





City of Pembroke Pines, FL

601 City Center Way
Pembroke Pines, FL
33025
www.ppines.com

Agenda Request Form

Agenda Number: 13.

File ID: 2020-R-19	Type: Resolution	Status: Passed
Version: 1	Agenda Section:	In Control: City Commission
Short Title: Proposed Resolution 2020-R-19: COVID-19 Anti-Hate Resolution		File Created: 05/26/2020 Final Action: 06/03/2020

Title: MOTION TO ADOPT PROPOSED RESOLUTION 2020-R-19.

PROPOSED RESOLUTION 2020-R-19 IS A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF PEMBROKE PINES, FLORIDA, DENOUNCING ANTI-SEMITISM, ANTI-ASIAN BIGOTRY, AND ALL HATEFUL SPEECH, VIOLENT ACTION AND THE SPREAD OF MISINFORMATION RELATED TO COVID-19; JOINING OTHER CITIES, COUNTIES AND STATES ACROSS THE COUNTRY IN AFFIRMING ITS COMMITMENT TO THE SAFETY AND WELL-BEING OF ALL COMMUNITY MEMBERS; CONTINUING ITS EFFORTS TO PROTECT RESIDENTS, TARGETS AND VICTIMS OF HATE; PLEDGING TO SUPPORT THE RIGHTS OF ALL PEOPLE; URGING RESIDENTS TO JOIN THE CITY OF PEMBROKE PINES IN CALLING ATTENTION TO THESE HARMS AND DENOUNCE HATE; PROVIDING FOR CONFLICTS; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

***Agenda Date:** 06/03/2020

Enactment Date: 06/03/2020

Agenda Number: 13.

Enactment Number: 3698

Internal Notes:

Attachments: 1. 2020-R-19 Anti-Hate Discrimination Resolution

Indexes:

1	City Commission	06/03/2020	adopt	Pass
Action Text: A motion was made by Commissioner Schwartz, seconded by Vice Mayor Siple, to adopt Proposed Resolution 2020-R-19. The motion carried by the following vote: Aye: - 5 Mayor Ortis, Vice Mayor Siple, Commissioner Good Jr., Commissioner Schwartz, and Chanzas Nay: - 0				

SUMMARY EXPLANATION AND BACKGROUND:

On Wednesday, May 20, 2020, Commissioner Schwartz introduced for discussion and possible action to support the Anti-Defamation League Resolution regarding COVID-19 and hate groups.

1. Since the outbreak of the COVID-19 virus, more than 5,034,458 cases and more than 329,186 deaths have been confirmed worldwide as of May 21, 2020, according to the Johns Hopkins University Coronavirus Resource Center, and according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 1,528,235 cases and 91,664 deaths have been reported in the United States as of May 21, 2020.
2. COVID-19 will not be stopped by political boundaries and was not created or caused by any race, nationality or ethnicity, and the World Health Organization has cautioned against using geographic descriptors that can fuel ethnic and racial discrimination. COVID-19 has infected people from all racial, national and ethnic backgrounds.
3. The City of Pembroke Pines is fully committed to the safety, security, and equal treatment of its residents as it confronts the COVID-19 pandemic.
4. Each individual has the ability to promote inclusiveness, celebrate diversity, support all fellow community members, prevent the spread of misinformation, and reject hate and bias in all forms. Hate crimes, discrimination and aggression against Asians and Jews are on the rise throughout the country as these groups are being blamed for the COVID-19 outbreak and spread.
5. The City of Pembroke Pines denounces anti-semitism, anti-Asian bigotry, and all hateful speech, violent action and the spread of misinformation related to COVID-19 that casts blame, promotes racism or discrimination or harms the City of Pembroke Pines Asian and Pacific Islander, Jewish, immigrant or other communities.
6. The City of Pembroke Pines joins cities, counties and states across the country in affirming its commitment to the safety and well-being of all community members, including the Asian and Jewish communities, and in combatting hate crimes targeting Asians, Jews and Pacific Islanders.

FINANCIAL IMPACT DETAIL: None