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**KENOSHA COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

**Resolution No. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

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| Subject:  **A RESOLUTION TO DISCOURAGE THE RESETTLEMENT OF  MIGRANTS IN KENOSHA COUNTY** | |
| Original [ x ] Revised [ ] 2nd Correction [ ] Resubmitted [ ] | |
| Date Submitted: 09/30/2024 | Date Resubmitted: |
| Submitted by: Supervisor Keith Gray | |
| Fiscal Note Attached [ ] | Legal Note Attached [ ] Agreement |
| Prepared by: Supervisor Keith Gray | Signature: |

WHEREAS, the immigration crisis in the United States, which involves a large influx of refugees and immigrants without family, jobs, housing, or other resources, has placed a significant and unsustainable demand on the public resources needed to support these individuals in the communities in which they have arrived, specifically in the areas of law enforcement, education, health care, and housing; and

WHEREAS, more than 10 million people have been reported as illegally entering the United States since January 2021; and

WHEREAS, Kenosha County believes it is in the best interests of the health, safety, and welfare of Kenosha County and its residents to properly prepare for the arrival of any large influx of refugees or immigrants who cannot care for themselves; and

WHEREAS, some bus services have been retained to drop off large numbers of these individuals, including children, in a manner that leaves the individuals exposed to great risks and the communities in which they arrive unprepared to assist them adequately; and

WHEREAS, Kenosha County requires support and advanced notice to ensure that proper care for these refugees or immigrants is available rather than responding on an emergency basis to unexpected drop-offs; and

WHEREAS, Kenosha County cannot safely and effectively address a sudden and unexpected arrival of large volumes of individuals in need of assistance without careful planning and resources; and

WHEREAS, “sanctuary cities” provide a safe haven for unplanned refugees or immigrants and discourage local law enforcement from reporting the immigration status of individuals and honoring requests by ICE to detain undocumented immigrants whom they apprehend; and

WHEREAS, Kenosha County is geographically located along an interstate that connects Chicago and Milwaukee, two cities that function as “sanctuary cities;” and

WHEREAS, there is a legitimate concern that this proximity could result in the unplanned relocation or resettlement of refugees or immigrants; and

WHEREAS, some of these refugees or immigrants are dangerous criminals, including those involved in the illegal drug trade, human trafficking, and gang activity; and

WHEREAS, “sanctuary cities” and an open border increase the probably of violent criminals coming from other countries and committing crimes in communities across the country, including Alejandro Jose Coronel Zarate, an affiliate of the Tren de Aragua transnational gang, who was brought to Prairie du Chien from the Dane County area and was arrested and charged with domestic violence, sexual assault, child abuse, and strangulation; and

WHEREAS, fentanyl is pouring into our communities and poisoning our citizens, and is mostly coming in from the United States’ southern border;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Kenosha County Board of Supervisors discourages the relocation of refugees or immigrants without proper planning in Kenosha County; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Kenosha County Board of Supervisors encourages all appropriate federal and state officials and agencies to seek settlement options in areas better able to absorb the volume of and potential illegal activities of such individuals; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Kenosha County Board of Supervisors encourages efforts at the federal and state level to give local officials a greater voice in determining whether their communities are appropriate for resettlement efforts; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Kenosha County Board of Supervisors respectfully requests the Wisconsin State Legislature enact laws to prohibit “sanctuary cities” in Wisconsin; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution shall be forwarded to Kenosha County’s state and federal legislative delegations, Governor Evers, all other Wisconsin counties, and the Wisconsin Counties Association.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_   
Supervisor Keith Gray

***Read below for my personal Input about Migrant Resettlement***

**I was elected to serve and represent the citizens of Kenosha County’s 19th District.  These words were chosen carefully… it does not say ‘…people living in Kenosha’s 19th District’, or ‘…the people of Kenosha’s 19th District’.  The overwhelming interests of my electors (legal citizens who vote) is that that public safety and government accountability are most important.**

**Overlay this with my orientation as a new County Supervisor where:**

**-A ride-along with our County Sheriff’s Officers for a Friday night shift really opened my eyes.**

**-Tours of both of our County detention facilities and met with staff regarding their needs and challenges.**

**-Meeting with the Clerk of Courts, Judges, and other staff within the Judicial system to better understand their functions and challenges, and to listen to their ideas on how to better serve the people of Kenosha.**

**-Learned from Senior Health and Human Services officials regarding their services, future needs, and reasons for cost increases that far outpace inflation and every other County Department.**

**Simultaneously, the last several weeks is County budget time where each department puts together their costs and needs for the coming year.  There is a multi-layered review process that ends with the County Supervisors voting to accept, amend, or reject the prosed budget.  In order to vote for this, Supervisors need some level of understanding of how each department is run, why they are asking for what they present, and to have some confidence that the money is being used responsibly. Most Supervisors attend many meetings where presentations are made, questions asked, and ideas exchanged.**

**This is the context in which I came up with the resolution concerning immigrants in Kenosha County.  Through all of this, I’ve asked one simple question of people at every level of County government:  What does it cost the County to provide services to and/or deal with undocumented people?  Nobody has been able to provide an answer that satisfies me…and I have a hard time approving the spending of hundreds of millions of public dollars without that information.**

**The resolution I proposed concerning the settlement of undocumented people in our County shined light on an issue that it seems nobody wants to talk about.  While the resolution format, wording, and content were not acceptable to many and was soundly voted down.  If that process prompts further discussion in search of information that I believe is relative to the effective operation of government and accountability to it’s citizens, then it is a worthwhile effort.**

**Moving forward, I am going to work with other Supervisors to obtain data relating to the cost to the taxpayer of undocumented residents in Kenosha.  I would hope that this information will allow us to have a discussion on weather there are limits to what we can absorb while still serving the people who pay in to the system through taxes and who entrusted us with their vote to look out for their interests.  Somewhere in here lies an answer that I expect will be acceptable to a meaningful majority.  To serve the people who put us in the position to look out for them…we need to do this.**