

RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF PROVIDENCE SUPPORTING A FEDERAL DEPARTMENT OF PEACE AND NONVIOLENCE

BY COUNCIL MEMBER CLIFF WOOD:

WHEREAS, on February 5, 2007, House Bill 808 was introduced in the United States House of Representatives to create a United States Department of Peace and Nonviolence, which to date has garnered the sponsorship of sixty-seven (67) members of the United States House of Representatives; and

WHEREAS, the proposed legislation to create a United States Department of Peace and Nonviolence will establish a cabinet-level department that will be headed by a Secretary of Peace and Nonviolence, who will advise the President on issues both domestic and international in scope, giving peace building a place, voice and budget at the highest levels of government; and

WHEREAS, the proposed federal legislation to create a United States Department of Peace and Nonviolence will benefit the City of Providence by holding peace as an organizing principle for American society, and by providing adequate funding for peace building initiatives which aim to change the tone of society from a culture of disrespect and violence towards a culture of respect and nonviolence; and

WHEREAS, the proposed federal legislation to create a United States Department of Peace and Nonviolence will benefit the City of Providence by supporting existing programs and developing new programs to address and reduce the number and frequency of incidents related to domestic violence, child and spousal abuse, school violence, gang violence, gun violence, and hate crimes which will assist members of our Police Department in experiencing fewer dangerous encounters especially while making routine runs; and

WHEREAS, the proposed federal legislation to create a United States Department of Peace and Nonviolence will benefit the City of Providence by developing and distributing to the states and their schools a peace and nonviolence curriculum with supportive materials for community building, communication, nonviolent conflict resolution, and mediation information, skills and resources; and

WHEREAS, the proposed federal legislation to create a United States Department of Peace and Nonviolence will benefit the City of Providence by encouraging and supporting development of conflict resolution and violence prevention initiatives from within the community, including its religious and non-governmental organizations, thus creating greater community involvement and thereby a strong, stable, cohesive civil society throughout the City of Providence; and

WHEREAS, such support will enhance and build upon the considerable, award-winning and nationally-recognized violence prevention initiatives and successes in Providence, including programs that have proven the efficacy and promise of coordinated and community-based peace building initiatives such as the Community Policing initiative of the Providence Police Department, the Street Workers program of the Institute for the Study and Practice of Nonviolence, the Community Mediation Center and the Providence After School Alliance; and

WHEREAS, many national and international organizations, including, but not limited to, Amnesty International, Center for Nonviolent Communications, Institute for Multi-Track Diplomacy, Physicians for Social Responsibility, September 11th Families for Peaceful Tomorrows, Fellowship of Reconciliation, Pax Christi USA, School Mediation Center, Veterans for Peace, and Youth for Environmental Sanity, have endorsed the legislation to establish a Department for Peace and Nonviolence; and

WHEREAS, many local government agencies, including, but not limited to, Chicago, Illinois; San Francisco, California; Atlanta, Georgia; Detroit, Michigan; Minneapolis, Minnesota; Newark, New Jersey; and Cambridge, Massachusetts, have passed similar resolutions in support of the enactment of the proposed legislation;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Providence City Council adopts this resolution in favor of enactment of House Bill 808 to create a United States Department of Peace and Nonviolence.

PASSED UNANIMOUSLY
JULY 19, 2007