

RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF THE NATIONAL MOVEMENT OF CONGREGATIONS OF FAITH

Urging the United States Department of Homeland Security to grant favorable exercise of prosecutorial discretion to Samuel Oliver-Bruno and José Heriberto Chicas;

WHEREAS, the United States has a proud humanitarian tradition since the late 1970s of welcoming refugees of all nationalities and religions – a tradition which is deeply grounded in our most fundamental and deeply held national values;

WHEREAS, the City of Durham has a long standing commitment not only to being open and welcoming to immigrants and refugees but also to understanding that our immigrant and refugee communities are integral to the life in our City;

WHEREAS, Samuel Oliver-Bruno, resident of this country for over twenty years, entered this country as a youth to escape poverty and is a loving and supportive father to one US citizen son and husband to his chronically-ill wife, the sole breadwinner for his family, a student at the Divinity School at Duke University, has received refuge from deportation for four months at CityWell United Methodist Church in Durham;

WHEREAS, José Heriberto Chicas, resident of this country for over thirty years, entered the country as a youth fleeing a violent civil war and is a loving and supportive father to four children, three of which are US citizens, has received refuge from deportation for nine months at School for Conversion of St. John's Baptist Church in Durham;

WHEREAS, deportation to El Salvador, in the case of José, and to Mexico, in the case of Samuel, is life-threatening for these families, and would mean permanent separation from their families, communities and churches;

WHEREAS, Durham City Council recognizes that four others are in sanctuary in North Carolina: Juana Tobar in Asheboro; Oscar Canales in Greensboro; Eliseo Jimenez in Raleigh; and Rosa del Carmen Ortez-Cruz in Chapel Hill; we urge these cities to pass resolutions in solidarity with them; and

WHEREAS, ICE (Immigration and Customs Enforcement) is invested with discretion not to pursue, or to defer, immigration enforcement when the interest served by deportation is not substantial or is outweighed by considerations including the presence of sympathetic factors, many of which are evident in the cases of Samuel and José;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

That the Durham City Council joins and affirms the leadership of the National Movement of Congregations of Faith providing refuge to people displaced due to imminent threats of deportation; and

The Durham City Council urges US Congressman GK Butterfield and Congressman David Price to present private bills to stop the deportation of Samuel Oliver-Bruno and José Heriberto Chicas, so they may return home to their families immediately without the threat of deportation.

That the Durham City Council implores the United States Department of Homeland Security to grant favorable exercise of prosecutorial discretion to Samuel Oliver-Bruno and José Heriberto Chicas, so they can continue to provide for and support their families, including US citizen children; and

That the City Clerk send copies of this resolution to Kirstjen Nielsen, Secretary of Homeland Security; Elaine Duke, Deputy Director of Homeland Security; Thomas D. Homan, Director of ICE; and Sean Gallagher, local Field Office Director of Immigration and Customs Enforcement.