

INTRODUCED: 6/8/2020

REFERRED TO: Committee of the Whole

SPONSOR: Councillors Adamson, Barth, Boots, Brown, Carlino, E. Evans, Johnson, Jones, Mascari, McCormick, Osili, Potts, Ray, Robinson

DIGEST: declares racism as a public health crisis in Indianapolis and Marion County

SOURCE:

Initiated by: Councillor Osili

Drafted by: Council Staff

LEGAL REQUIREMENTS FOR ADOPTION:

Subject to approval or veto by Mayor

PROPOSED EFFECTIVE DATE:

Adoption and approvals

GENERAL COUNSEL APPROVAL:



Date: June 4, 2020

CITY-COUNTY SPECIAL RESOLUTION NO. , 2020

A SPECIAL RESOLUTION declaring racism as a public health crisis in Indianapolis and Marion County.

WHEREAS, the Social Determinants of Health, defined as the social and material factors that influence health, including employment, housing, education, health care, public safety, and food access— are known to impact life-long health outcomes beginning even before birth; and

WHEREAS, health equity is defined as all residents having the opportunity to attain their highest level of health; and

WHEREAS, inequities are created when barriers prevent individuals and communities from accessing these conditions and reaching their full potential; and

WHEREAS, the American Public Health Association finds racism to be a barrier to health equity and has named racism a driving force of how these social determinants of health are distributed; and

WHEREAS, the American Academy of Pediatrics has declared that racism is a barrier to wellness that has a profound impact on the health status of children, adolescents, emerging adults, and their families and that the continued negative impact of racism on health and well-being through implicit and explicit biases, institutional structures, and interpersonal relationships is clear; and

WHEREAS, the United States Office of Disease Prevention recognizes that racial discrimination negatively impacts health outcomes; and

WHEREAS, the American College of Physicians has found that African-Americans in particular are at risk of being subjected to discrimination and violence against them because of their race, endangering them and even costing them their lives; and

WHEREAS, the non-partisan National Partnership for Women and Families has found that in the United States, health and racism are inextricably linked, creating a harmful impact on individuals and communities of color, including unequal access to quality education, employment, livable wages, healthy food, stable and affordable housing, and safe and sustainable communities; and

WHEREAS, the American Psychological Association, the American Medical Association and the American Academy of Family Physicians have declared hate crimes a public health concern; and

WHEREAS, the U.S. National Institutes of Health reports that multiple studies suggest that experiences of racism or discrimination raise the risk of emotional and physical health problems, including depression, cardiovascular disease, hypertension, and even death; and

WHEREAS, researchers at the IU Public Policy Institute and IUPUI Polis Center find that racism negatively impacts the health of communities of color in Indianapolis and throughout Marion County; and

WHEREAS, the IUPUI Polis Center SAVI program has found that racial disparities in educational attainment in Marion County are largely a result of historic policies dating back to the early half of the 1900s, such as segregation and linking school funding to property values; and find that these practices have led locally to generations of Black exclusion from education, healthcare access, and other resources largely monopolized in Marion County's White communities; and

WHEREAS, the negative repercussions of historical racism, including but not limited to racist federal housing policies and discriminatory lending practices of the 20th century known as "redlining," continue to negatively impact:

- access to nutritious food in Black neighborhoods, which contributes to higher rates of Type II Diabetes, hypertension, heart disease, and obesity;
- economic security for Black residents, who are more likely to live in neighborhoods with less access to traditional banking institutions and high numbers of payday lenders;
- educational achievement for Black residents, who are more likely to live in areas with underperforming school systems;
- rates of environmentally-based health problems for Black residents such as lead poisoning and asthma due to living in neighborhoods with older buildings and greater proximity to pollution-causing industries, resulting in rates of chronic diseases, including asthma, which are significantly higher in communities of color throughout Indianapolis;
- rates of infant and maternal mortality for Black mothers and children, due to living in geographical areas with less access to healthcare, and resulting in mortality rates more than twice that for White infants; and

WHEREAS, the IUPUI Polis Center SAVI project has found that historic and systemic inequities in Marion County put many Black individuals at higher risk for being exposed to the novel coronavirus, more vulnerable to novel infectious diseases such as COVID-19; and more vulnerable to having a serious case of COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, Black residents of Marion County have tested positive for COVID-19 at a rate nearly twice that of White residents; and

WHEREAS, Black residents are 29% of the Marion County population but account for 37% of COVID-19-related deaths to date; and

WHEREAS, the life expectancy in some Indianapolis communities of color is as many 14 years less than that of their White neighbors; and

WHEREAS, racism operates on systemic, institutional, and interpersonal levels, all of which operate throughout time and across generations; and

WHEREAS, on February 20th of this year, the members of this Council unanimously adopted Proposal 85, 2020, declaring racism unjust, reiterating our support for equal rights for all and affirming the City's commitment to ending disparities based on race, place, or identity; now, therefore:

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY-COUNTY COUNCIL OF THE
CITY OF INDIANAPOLIS AND OF MARION COUNTY, INDIANA:

SECTION 1. That we declare racism to be a public health crisis in Indianapolis and Marion County that affects all members of our community and deserves action from all levels of government and civil society; and

SECTION 2. That this Council commits to frank and open discussions of race and the impact of the decisions we make upon racial inequities in our community, that these discussions will be integrated into our daily work together, and that we will address issues of race and racial disparities in a full and forthright manner; and

SECTION 3. That we call upon all city and county elected officials and departments to continue, with urgency, the review of policies and procedures for the purposes of eradicating implicit and explicit racial bias and develop instead policies and procedures that build racial equity; and

SECTION 4. That City and County departments should immediately access all available tools to eliminate disparities based on race, place, or identity across key indicators of success, including health, education, criminal justice, the environment, employment and the economy; and

SECTION 5. That City and County departments shall collect data, disaggregated by race, on department staffing, procurement, contracting, and recipients of government intervention; that departments present the data to the Council and make this data publicly available via their websites, with the intention of incorporating racial equity into the analysis of governmental action and strengthening the city's commitment to analyze and address racial disparities; and

SECTION 6. The Mayor is invited to join in this resolution by affixing his signature hereto.

SECTION 7. This resolution shall be in full force and effect upon adoption and compliance with IC 36-3-4-14

The foregoing was passed by the City-County Council this _____ day of _____, 2020, at _____ p.m.

ATTEST:

SaRita Hughes
Clerk, City-County Council

Vop Osili
President, City-County Council

Presented by me to the Mayor this _____ day of _____, 2020.

SaRita Hughes
Clerk, City-County Council

Approved and signed by me this _____ day of _____, 2020.

Joseph H. Hogsett, Mayor