

OFFERED BY COUNCILOR RUTHZEE LOUIJEUNE, ARROYO, BOK, COLETTA, FERNANDES ANDERSON, FLAHERTY, LARA. MEJIA, MURPHY, WORRELL AND BREADON



CITY OF BOSTON IN CITY COUNCIL

ORDER FOR A HEARING ON THE NEEDS AND SERVICES FOR MIGRANT POPULATIONS

WHEREAS, On September 14, approximately 50 migrants arrived on Martha's Vineyard after being fraudulently induced to board planes with false promises of work, educational opportunities, and help with immigration paperwork. They initially believed they were heading to Boston, but told mid-flight that their destination would be Martha's Vineyard. The Florida governor has since taken credit in the hopes of inciting chaos and publicity for himself; *and*

WHEREAS, However, Vineyard residents themselves quickly came together to feed and shelter the Venezuelan migrants, and attorneys helped them navigate the immigration system. Martha's Vineyard Community Services purchased cell phones for all the migrants and other organizations helped address their immediate needs; *and*

WHEREAS, Boston has seen a substantial rise in the number of migrant families seeking shelter and asylum over the past several months. Many of these families are showing up in emergency rooms around the Boston area in need of medical care and shelter; *and*

WHEREAS, In statements, Boston Medical Center and Mass General Brigham acknowledged its hospitals are reporting an increase of migrants in need of shelter, a need that the hospitals are not equipped to meet; *and*

WHEREAS, The Immigrant Family Services Institute, a Mattapan nonprofit organization that meets the needs of migrants who have made it to Boston, said it has welcomed more than 1,800 people between May and July, and August numbers are estimated to be more than 600 people, most fleeing violence in Haiti, a six-fold increase from a typical month; *and*

WHEREAS, The Legislature recently allocated \$8 million to the Immigrant Family Services Institute, yet because of the ongoing migrant crisis that money was quickly used and more is needed; *and*

WHEREAS, The Boston City Council approved \$1.1 Million of the American Rescue Plan Act (“ARPA”) for temporary housing for migrants, but these funds have yet to be allocated; *and*

WHEREAS, Recently the gradual arrival of around 7,000 migrants caused Washington, D.C.’s mayor to declare a FEMA public emergency, and ask the National Guard for help. The New York governor and Legislature are also looking at similar options for emergency support for new arrivals; *and*

WHEREAS, Boston should also allocate additional funding to city programs, services and nonprofits providing legal assistance, work to remove barriers in accessing city services for migrants, particularly Black migrants, and survey whether city-owned empty buildings can provide temporary housing; *and*

WHEREAS, The Mayor’s Office of Immigrant Advancement must be prepared to allocate resources, direct aid, and offer additional resources to migrant relief organizations; ***NOW, THEREFORE BE IT***

ORDERED: That the appropriate committee of the Boston City Council hold a hearing on the needs and services for migrant populations and that appropriate individuals and organizations attend including the Mayor’s Office for Immigrant Advancement, Mayor's Office of Housing, Massachusetts Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy Coalition, Massachusetts Office for Immigrants and Refugees, and others be invited to testify.

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