

**2024 IAOHRA CONFERENCE
ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING
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St. Louis, MO**

Final Adopted Resolutions

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RESOLUTION #1

INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF OFFICIAL HUMAN RIGHTS AGENCIES

**TITLE: RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF PAID LEAVE FOR VULNERABLE
WORKERS**

PURPOSE: The resolution affirms IAOHRA's support of laws that provide paid leave or vacation time for the nation's most vulnerable workers, which promote the human right to rest and leisure.

WHEREAS, the International Association of Official Human Rights Agencies (IAOHRA) is a professional association of state, county, and city governmental human rights commissions in the United States of America and several statutory human rights agencies in Canada; and

WHEREAS, IAOHRA's goals are "to foster human and intergroup relations, to enhance human rights practices under law, and to promote civil and human rights around the world;" and

WHEREAS, Article 24 of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights asserts that "[e]veryone has the right to rest and leisure, including reasonable limitation of working hours and periodic holidays with pay;" and

WHEREAS, a June 2014 report by The Council of Economic Advisers asserted that "there are large disparities in access to paid leave across groups, with access to paid leave being particularly low among Hispanics, less educated workers, and low wage workers;" and

WHEREAS, it is in the collective public policy interest for workers to have some paid leave from work to maintain their health and well-being, care for their families, or use for any other reason of their choosing; and

WHEREAS, a study in the January 2023 Compensation Benefits Review affirms that paid leave has benefits for employers including "a high return on investment with positive effects towards worker productivity, morale, job satisfaction, and reduced job turnover;" and

WHEREAS, having access to paid leave encourages workers to take time off when ill and not potentially expose coworkers to illness, reducing the spread of disease and increasing collective productivity.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the International Association of Official Human Rights Agencies (IAOHRA) will support federal, state, and local legislation and public policies that advance paid leave or vacation time for the nation's most vulnerable workers.

RESOLUTION #2

INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF OFFICIAL HUMAN RIGHTS AGENCIES

**TITLE: RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF PRIORITIZING MATERNAL HEALTH AS A
HUMAN RIGHT**

PURPOSE: The resolution reaffirms IAOHRA's commitment to laws that advance equity in maternal health and the prioritization of maternal health as a human right.

WHEREAS, the International Association of Official Human Rights Agencies (IAOHRA) is a professional association of state, county, and city governmental human rights commissions in the United States of America and several statutory human rights agencies in Canada;

WHEREAS, IAOHRA's goals are "to foster human and intergroup relations, to enhance human rights practices under law, and to promote civil and human rights around the world;" and

WHEREAS, in May 2023, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) reported that "though there has been significant progress in reducing [the] global maternal mortality ratio (MMR) between 2000 and 2015, the numbers have been stagnant when averaging rates of reduction between 2016 and 2022. In most regions, the rate of reduction stalled and in Western Europe and North America, and Latin America and the Caribbean, MMR increased over the 2016-2022 period;" and,

WHEREAS, maternal death/mortality is defined by the World Health Organization (WHO) as "the death of a woman while pregnant or within 42 days of termination of pregnancy, irrespective of the duration and the site of the pregnancy, from any cause related to or aggravated by the pregnancy or its management, but not from accidental or incidental causes, and maternal morbidity as "any health condition attributed to and/or complicating pregnancy, and childbirth that has a negative impact on the woman's well-being and/or functioning;" and

WHEREAS, each year in the U.S., hundreds of women die from complications related to pregnancy and childbirth, known as maternal death, at a rate many times greater than in other developed nations; and

WHEREAS, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) officials and stakeholders stated that the COVID-19 pandemic worsened factors contributing to maternal health disparities, like access to care, cardiovascular problems, and other underlying conditions, which contributed to a 78% rise in maternal mortality rates in the U.S. between 2000-2020, according to the WHO; and

WHEREAS, CDC data shows that maternal deaths increased during the COVID-19 pandemic and COVID-19 was a contributing factor in one-quarter of all maternal deaths in 2020 and 2021 combined, and although the pandemic has been substantially brought under control, there will continue to be ramifications for maternal health outcomes into the future; and

WHEREAS, in 2021, the U.S. had one of the worst rates of maternal mortality in the country's history going back to 1965. 1,205 people died of maternal causes in the U.S. in 2021, which represents a 40% increase from the previous year, and the U.S. rate for 2021 was 32.9 maternal deaths per 100,000 live births, which is more than ten times the estimated rates of some other high-income countries, including Australia, Austria, Israel, Japan and Spain which all reported between 2 and 3 deaths per 100,000 in 2020; and

WHEREAS, according to the CDC, cardiovascular conditions such as pulmonary embolisms, uncontrolled bleeding, and problems emanating from hypertension are the leading cause of pregnancy-related deaths in the U.S. and sadly most, up to 91%, of maternal deaths due to clinical, system, social, community or patient factors are preventable, as the health-care solutions to prevent or manage complications are well known, and more than half of pregnancy related deaths occur more than 60 days postpartum when ongoing care should be available; and

WHEREAS, the maternal death rate for Black women was 44.0 per 100,000 live births in 2019, then increased to 55.3 in 2020, and 68.9 in 2021. In contrast, White (not Hispanic or Latina) women had death rates of 17.9, 19.1, and 26.1, respectively; and

WHEREAS, the maternal death rate for Hispanic or Latina women was lower at 12.6 per 100,000 live births compared with White (not Hispanic or Latina) women at 17.9 in 2019, but increased significantly during the pandemic in 2020 to 18.2 and in 2021 to 27.5 per 100 live births; and

WHEREAS, for mental health conditions and substance use disorders, all racial/ethnic groups had similar pregnancy-related mortality ratios, but for medical causes of death, Black women had a pregnancy-related mortality ratio nearly three times that of White women; and

WHEREAS, disparities in other adverse maternal outcomes, such as preterm and low birthweight births and severe maternal morbidity, which represent a group of potentially life threatening unexpected maternal conditions or complications that occur during labor and delivery that may cause long-lasting health problems that extend beyond the pregnancy, persisted for Black women.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the International Association of Official Human Rights Agencies (IAOHRA) will support federal, state, and local legislation and public policies that advance equity in maternal health and prioritize maternal health as a human right and will continue to receive and seek out information from maternal health stakeholders to fully understand the factors leading to high maternal morbidity and mortality rates in Black and Latina women.

RESOLUTION #3

INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF OFFICIAL HUMAN RIGHTS AGENCIES

TITLE: RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF ASIAN AMERICAN DATA INCLUSION

PURPOSE: The resolution affirms IAOHRA's commitment to efforts that advance Asian American inclusion in data collection to improve understanding, service, and human rights complaint investigations.

WHEREAS, the International Association of Official Human Rights Agencies (IAOHRA) is a professional association of state, county, and city governmental human rights commissions in the United States of America and several statutory human rights agencies in Canada;

WHEREAS, IAOHRA's goals are "to foster human and intergroup relations, to enhance human rights practices under law, and to promote civil and human rights around the world;" and

WHEREAS, in 1992 the United Nations passed the "Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities" and subsequently required an annual report on relevant developments and challenges experienced by national or ethnic, religious, and linguistic minorities; and

WHEREAS, when possible, Human Rights Agencies must collect accurate data to understand and serve the specific needs of its diverse communities; and

WHEREAS, the United States Census estimated that 24.7 million Asian Americans resided in the United States as of 2022, making Asian Americans more than 7% of the total U.S. population; and

WHEREAS, according to the Pew Research Center, the "nation's Asian population rose to 11.9 million by 2000 and then nearly doubled to 22.4 million by 2019 – an 88% increase within two decades," making them a quickly growing national population; and,

WHEREAS, Asian Americans include people whose origins and ancestries lie in East Asia, Southeast Asia, the Pacific Islands, South Asia and the Indian subcontinent; and **WHEREAS**, Asian Americans come from over 40 countries, including over 20 ethnicities, speaking 2,300 languages and dialects; and

WHEREAS, the Pew Research Center reports that as of November 2023, “about one-third of Asian adults (32%) say they personally know an Asian person in the U.S. who has been threatened or attacked because of their race or ethnicity since the COVID-19 pandemic began in 2020” and IAOHRA recognizes the rise in anti-Asian hate and discrimination; and

WHEREAS, many Human Rights Agencies, local and state agencies do not comprehensively or consistently collect or present data on Asian Americans, making it difficult to investigate discrimination and harassment claims against Asian Americans; and

WHEREAS, the lack of comprehensive and consistent data on Asian Americans hinders our collective and individual abilities to understand and serve these communities. **NOW**,

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the International Association of Official Human Rights Agencies (IAOHRA) will support federal, state, and local public policies that advance Asian American inclusion in data collection to improve understanding, service, and human rights complaint investigations.

RESOLUTION #4

INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF OFFICIAL HUMAN RIGHTS AGENCIES

TITLE: THE CONNECTION BETWEEN RESIDENTIAL AND SCHOOL SEGREGATION

WHEREAS, There is a dire need for a better understanding of the relationship between residential and school segregation and a deep need to put an end to the disproportionate effects of such segregation on Black communities and other communities of color; and

WHEREAS, Housing and education in the United States have long been inextricably linked with the progress or regress of residential and school segregation being sequentially related throughout history; and

WHEREAS, Segregationist school practices endured for years before the Supreme Court unanimously found state-sanctioned school segregation to be unconstitutional in the landmark case of *Brown v. Board of Education Topeka* in 1954; and

WHEREAS, Likewise, in 1968, racially exclusive deeds and discriminatory zoning, among other practices, were supposedly outlawed when Congress passed the Fair Housing Act although the Act was criticized as insufficient because, by the time it was passed, homes were no longer as affordable as they were when White Americans first bought into exclusive suburbs and gained the equity and wealth that followed; and

WHEREAS, Widespread residential and school segregation have continued despite the *Brown* decision and the Fair Housing Act through massive resistance efforts at the state and federal levels, including, but not limited to, the Southern Manifesto, and segregationist advocacy groups; and

WHEREAS, Today many schools and neighborhoods remain "stubbornly segregated along racial and ethnic lines" with more than 80% of large metropolitan areas in the United States being more segregated in 2019 than in 1990 and roughly 18.5 million kindergarten through twelfth grade public school students being enrolled in predominately (75% or more) same-race or same- ethnicity schools, with 14% of students attending schools where 90% of the student population was of a single race or ethnicity between 2020-2021; and

WHEREAS, Residential segregation directs and substantially reflects how schools are financed and resourced with local and state revenues that fund each school often tied to the residential property value in each school's district; and

WHEREAS, The higher the school's property value, the better resources the school receives, with studies showing that the United States spends \$293 less per year per-student on schools

with a higher percentage of non-white students and that an increase of 10% in non-white students in schools is associated with a decrease in spending of \$75 per student; and

WHEREAS, The segregation of schools ultimately reinforces residential segregation and hinders residential mobility and increases an exposure to crime for many Black and other students of color, potentially impacting child development and learning opportunities for students.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that IAOHRA supports efforts for improved and more frequent data collection regarding the symbiotic relationship between residential segregation and school segregation.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that IAOHRA urges the U.S. Department of Education to provide higher funding to economically impacted schools and support federal and state legislation that focuses on eradicating the residential and school segregation that has a disproportionate effect on Black students.

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that IAHORA will disseminate this Resolution to state and federal legislators, the U.S. Department of Education, and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

RESOLUTION #5

INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF OFFICIAL HUMAN RIGHTS AGENCIES

TITLE: TESTING AS A CIVIL RIGHTS MECHANISM TO PROVE DISCRIMINATION

WHEREAS, Widespread discrimination against Black Americans continues to exist in housing, employment and other areas of American Life including public accommodations; and

WHEREAS, Discrimination is on the rise in the United States, as manifested by an increase in incidents of bias, hate crimes, hate groups, and mass shootings resulting from the proliferation of hate content in media, and the normalization of biased rhetoric; and

WHEREAS, The Pew Research Center in a nationwide survey found that 95 percent of Black adults felt Black Americans continue to experience discrimination and 80 percent expressed that Black Americans experience "a lot" of discrimination; and

WHEREAS, 54% of Hispanic adults, half of Asian adults and 38% of White adults say that Black Americans face "some" discrimination; and

WHEREAS, Living wage employment, affordable housing, and equal access to public accommodations, services, and opportunities are essential to well-being and equal citizenship; and

WHEREAS, Conservative courts and the erosion of legal precedent have made proving discrimination more difficult to prove; and

WHEREAS, Direct and clarifying evidence greatly improves the record of proof needed to prove illegal discrimination but is frequently unavailable in legal cases; and,

WHEREAS, Redress through administrative or legal remedies is useful and necessary to fight against discrimination; and

WHEREAS, Housing testing is a proven methodology for establishing illegal discrimination in administrative and judicial matters and precedent; and,

WHEREAS, Effective housing testing requires training modules and certification to enable its use within civil rights and fair housing agencies; and

WHEREAS, IAOHRA has historically supported the use of testing as a mechanism to prove discrimination in housing, public accommodation, and other uses.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that IAOHRA supports the establishment and continued operation of fair housing testing and training programs that utilize best practices in identifying illegal discrimination in administrative and judicial matters.