

# 2022 IAOHRA CONFERENCE

## Resolutions

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August 17, 2022  
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**RESOLUTION # 1**

**Adopted by the  
INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF OFFICIAL HUMAN RIGHTS  
AGENCIES  
August 17, 2022**

**TITLE: Addressing the Racial Wealth Gap**

**WHEREAS**, it has been over 50 years since the passage of landmark civil rights legislation outlawing discrimination based on race, gender, religion and national origin, data reveals that economic disparities based on race persist. The median White household has a net worth 10 times that of the median African American household; and

**WHEREAS**, the racial wealth gap is the consequence of decades of inequality and discrimination stemming from the system of chattel slavery, mandated segregation, discrimination in education, exclusion from public programs that promoted homeownership and limited access to employment opportunities; and

**WHEREAS**, the Social Security Act of 1935 excluded agricultural and domestic workers, which was 65 percent of the African American workforce; racism and discrimination in state-controlled G.I. Bill programs excluded many Black veterans in the South from seeking higher education and getting access to home loans; and the Federal Housing Administration, established in 1934, designed and implemented a nationwide system of racial classification in individual neighborhoods known as redlining, the vestiges of which are under-invested, under-resourced and low opportunity in Black neighborhoods; and

**WHEREAS**, because of structural, institutional and systemic racism in policies and practices, African Americans have not been able to accumulate or pass on wealth. The Black-White racial wealth gap is a structural, policy created problem, and it will require structural, policy-driven solutions; and

**WHEREAS**, IAOHRA supports increased funding in infrastructure, business development and green spaces in racially and economically isolated communities, in addition to increasing the federal minimum wage and cancelling student loan debt which disproportionately affects African Americans and other communities of color; and

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**WHEREAS**, IAOHRA, through its members will advocate for policy solutions that address historic discriminatory and exploitive policies that fueled the racial gap and continue to strip wealth from communities of color; and

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that IAOHRA will advocate for improving data collection on race and wealth with data disaggregated by race and ethnicity, in addition to adopting a racial equity framework or lens to assess the current and past impact of public policy on the racial wealth gap. IAOHRA will further advocate for the use of project surveys such as the National Asset Scorecard for Communities of Color (NASCC) by the Census Bureau or the Federal Reserve System, providing data on debt and assets disaggregated by race, ethnicity, tribal affiliation, etc., establishing a benchmark resulting in better advocacy, research and policy solutions to address and decrease the racial wealth gap.

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**Robin S. Toma, President IAOHRA**

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**RESOLUTION # 2**

**Adopted by the**  
**INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF OFFICIAL HUMAN RIGHTS**  
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**August 17, 2022**

**TITLE:** RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF VOTING RIGHTS

**PURPOSE:**

**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**, IA OHRA'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**, among developed countries the United States of America has one of the lowest voter turnout rates with almost 25 percent of eligible voters not being registered, *and*

**WHEREAS**, the right of a people to determine their destiny through a political arrangement that respects, protects and elevates the right of individuals to participate in collective decision making is a universal right embraced and employed by numerous countries and enshrined as a pillar of human rights in Article 21 of the United Nations' *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*; *and*

**WHEREAS**, the fundamental basis of the United States of America's representative democracy is the right of citizens to participate in the operation and function of government at the local, state and national level primarily through the exercise of their right to vote; *and*

**WHEREAS**, the right to vote being originally granted to white male property owners at the founding of the United States of America, with incremental and sustained gains in the expansion of the right to vote being achieved by other populations and demographics as a result of decades of unrelenting pursuit, and collective and individual struggle and sacrifice; *and*

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**WHEREAS**, the right to vote was granted to male citizens of African descent 82 years after adoption of the *United States Constitution* on June 21, 1788, with passage of the 15<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the *United States Constitution* on February 3, 1870, which right was immediately thwarted by 95 years of structural, organized and systemic efforts of racists citizens, politicians and institutions of government, through laws such as poll taxes, grandfather clauses, literacy tests, property tests

**WHEREAS**, approximately 5.85 million people, including one in thirteen African Americans in the United States, cannot vote as a result of laws that disenfranchise people with felony convictions: and gerrymandering in addition to racially motivated acts of physical violence, intimidation, mayhem, murder and other illicit means to prevent and dilute the vote of citizens of African descent, necessitating the *Voting Rights Act of 1965*; and

**WHEREAS**, the right to vote was granted to women citizens with passage of the *19th Amendment* to the *United States Constitution* on August 18, 1920, 132 years after the *United States Constitution* granted white males the right to vote, and as a result of decades of women pursuing the right to vote through protest, struggle and suffering the indignities consequential to structural and persistent male supremacy; and

**WHEREAS**, the right to vote was granted to Native Americans on June 2, 1924 with passage of the *Indian Citizenship Act*, 136 years after the United States Constitution granted white males the right to vote, as a result of concerted advocacy, struggle and suffering the indifference of politicians; and

**WHEREAS**, the right to gain citizenship, denied to Chinese immigrants and American born Chinese by the passage of the 1882 *Chinese Exclusion Act*, resulted in Chinese born Americans being prevented from acquiring the right to vote until its repeal 61 years later in 1943; and

**WHEREAS**, the citizens of Washington, D.C. then being significantly non-white citizens and primarily those of African descent, were granted the right to vote in presidential elections on March 29, 1961 with passage of the 23<sup>rd</sup> Amendment to the *United States Constitution*, 173 years after the *United States Constitution* granted the right to vote to white male citizens; and

**WHEREAS**, assessments of poll taxes were prohibited in federal elections on January 23, 1964, with passage of the 24<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the *United States Constitution*, 176 years after the creation of the *United States Constitution* and 94

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years after male descendants of African were afforded the right to vote and to whom the taxes would significantly impact; *and*

**WHEREAS**, the International Association of Official Human Rights Agencies (IAOHRA) has been diligently working alongside of local, state, national and international agencies to encourage those who can vote to exercise their right and to eliminate barriers to participation in exercising ones' vote; and

**WHEREAS**, the arc of voting rights in the United States has gradually, but steadily been in the direction of inclusion and expansion since passage of the *15<sup>th</sup> Amendment*, with the support of both republican and democratic national political leadership as evidenced by the ratification of the *26<sup>th</sup> Amendment* on June 1, 1971, which lowered the voting age to 18 years; amendment to the *Voting Right Act* on August 6, 1975 requiring that districts containing significant numbers of non-English-speaking voters provide those voters with instructions and assistance in voting and registering; passage of the *Voting Accessibility for the Elderly and Handicapped Act* on September 28, 1984 requiring polling locations in federal elections be accessible for the elderly and individuals with disabilities and alternative means of voting be provided where assessable locations are unavailable; passage of the *National Voter Registration Act* of 1993 on May 20, 1993, which requires, among other things, that state motor vehicle agencies provide opportunities for voter registration, States offer mail-in voter registration applications, States provide voter registration opportunities at certain State and local office; passage of the *Help America Vote Act* on October 29, 2002 which made broad and systemic reforms to the national voting processes; *and*

**WHEREAS**, the citizens of the United States have expressed their unequivocal commitment to the principle of democratic rule and making the request to update voting policies, including but not limited to: No-excuse absentee voting; straight ticket voting; right to use secret ballot; right to register to vote by mail; ability to register to vote at the poll on election day; and automatic voter registration; *and*

**WHEREAS**, some recent political efforts and initiatives throughout the United States have challenged historical gains made to expand voter rights to more citizens and efforts made to increase policies and practices that facilitate a less burdensome process for exercising the right to vote; *and*

**WHEREAS**, the right to vote being a fundamental civil right, the International Association of Official Human Rights Agencies (IAOHRA) has a duty to assure that efforts within the United States intended to impact voting polices, practices

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and laws do so in a manner that does *not* discriminate against persons based on race, color, religion, national origin, genetic information, sex, age, marital status, height, weight, arrest record, and physical and mental disability and that the International Association of Official Human Rights Agencies (IAOHRA) has duty to facilitate, encourage, promote and recommend laws, policies and practices that expand voter participation and remove unnecessary barriers to the exercise of the right to vote; *and*

**WHEREAS**, the International Association of Official Human Rights Agencies (IAOHRA) is certain that the strength of a democracy is not measured in the longevity of its reign but in the prevalence of educated voters and their abiding commitment to secure the franchise, undiluted and easily exercised, for those in whose hands the right to vote may serve as a tool to forge a future that embodies the best of an enlightened and compassionate humanity; and that being the longest enduring modern representative democracy and a leading example and proponent of democratic rights, the United States of America has an unquestionable obligation to increase and not retreat from the expansion and protection of voting rights; *and*

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the International Association of Official Human Rights Agencies (IAOHRA) encourages the executive and legislative branches of the United States to solemnly heed and respectfully honor the innumerable sacrifices, hard fought gains, and deep aspirations of citizens for participation in their government, evidenced by state and federal historic voting rights efforts, as they draft, propose, deliberate and vote on voting rights legislation; and that they responsibly exercise their office and powers inherent therein to continue the expansion of voting rights, improved voter education and increased voter participation for the benefit of all citizen and their posterity; *and*

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the International Association of Official Human Rights Agencies (IAOHRA) has made voting rights a priority focus, and it supports local, federal and state policies, practices, initiatives and laws that would allow for:

- Early voting;
- Increased access to and utilization of absentee ballots;
- Streamlined processes that allow for identification of voters;
- Alternative and responsible means of election funding that increase voter participation;
- Increased integrity in post-election audits;

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- Any other measures whose purpose and effect is to preserve the integrity and expansion of the right to vote; *and*

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the International Association of Official Human Rights Agencies (IAOHRA) supports efforts such as those mentioned in the preceding paragraphs that prove to be effective in encouraging those who can vote to exercise their right and eliminating barriers to participation in exercising ones' vote; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the International Association of Official Human Rights Agencies (IAOHRA) will continue to work with national, state and local civil rights enforcement and advocacy groups, and communities to enforce and protect the fifteenth amendment to the Constitution of the United States.

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**Robin S. Toma, President IAOHRA**



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**RESOLUTION # 3**

**Adopted by the  
INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF OFFICIAL HUMAN RIGHTS  
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**Title:** Racial healing through the exploration of reparations for African American descendants of Slaves in the United States

**WHEREAS**, the institution of slavery in the United States, beginning in 1619 and continuing through 1863, enriched American industries, commercial and financial corporations and transformed the newly established United States into an international economic power through the oppressive, dehumanizing, and torturous system of enslaved Black labor; and

**WHEREAS**, after slavery ended in the US, the slave-owners were compensated for the loss of their slaves, but those who had been held in bondage were never compensated for their labor, despite the promise of “40 acres and a mule”; and

**WHEREAS**, in the aftermath of slavery, African American citizens of this country continued to face brutal discrimination, as evidenced by Jim Crow, forced segregation, mass atrocities in Tulsa and Rosewood, the lynching period and to this day, mass incarceration; and

**WHEREAS**, the pervasiveness of structural institutionalized racism in all of American society has led to overwhelming black-white disparities in every area of endeavor, from housing to education and employment, business investment, economic prosperity, health, and wellness, including life expectancy and infant mortality; and

**WHEREAS**, according to the November 2020 edition of the New England Journal of Medicine, reparations are now widely considered to be the most effective means of breaking down the societal structure related to power, money, and access to resources, and indeed may be the only solution that can be applied inter-generationally that “would be an investment in the future and in reducing disparities that have been intractable for generations”; and

**WHEREAS**, local and state governments throughout the US have demonstrated a commitment to address these disparities by creating programs to generate public and private sources of funding, including dedicating tax revenues from enterprises

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that have historically profited from targeting African American consumers and other forms of discrimination that have fueled black-white disparities; and

**WHEREAS**, the International Association of Official Human Rights Agencies (IAOHRA) supports reparations for African Americans in the United States, and supports the need for a race-centered economic empowerment package for African Americans that builds generational wealth and accounts for not only slavery but the decades of racial discrimination;

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that IAOHRA urges the President of the United States and the members of Congress to move with a sense of urgency to engage in a process of racial healing to right these wrongs by prioritizing legislation to provide for financial reparations to African American descendants of slavery and the Jim Crow Era.

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**RESOLUTION # 4**

**Adopted by the**  
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**Title:** RESOLUTION SUPPORTING REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH CARE IN THE UNITED STATES

**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**, IA OHRA’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**, according to reports published by the Guttmacher Institute in 2004 and 2006, before Roe v. Wade, illegal abortions were estimated to range from 200,000 to 1.2 million per year and constituted at least 17 percent of all maternal deaths attributed to pregnancy and childbirth in 1965 alone; and

**WHEREAS**, Roe v. Wade, 410 U.S. 113 (1973) upheld the constitutional right to privacy, including in health care decisions and the right to access abortion care;

**WHEREAS**, the legalization of abortion in the United States led to safer practices and drastically reduced the incidences of maternal deaths and hospitalizations related to abortion; and

**WHEREAS**, on June 24, 2022, the United States Supreme Court’s decision in Dobbs v. Jackson Women’s Health Organization officially reversed Roe v. Wade declaring that the constitutional right to abortion, upheld for nearly 50 years no longer exists; and

**WHEREAS**, since the beginning of 2021, at least 25 states have passed laws restricting abortions, and just as many states are expected to outlaw or severely restrict abortion as a result of the overturning of Roe v. Wade; and

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**WHEREAS**, roughly 33 million women of childbearing age live in states with existing or expected abortion bans; and

**WHEREAS**, women seeking abortions in those states banning the procedure will have to travel an average of 276 miles each way to access abortions in parts of the country where abortions remain legal, an average of six times farther than before; and

**WHEREAS**, according to leading public health organizations such as the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, the American Medical Association, American Academy of Family Physicians, and the American Osteopathic Association, blocking women's access to legal abortion "jeopardize[s] women's health"; and

**WHEREAS**, the facts that have developed since Roe v. Wade was decided to reaffirm that people of the United States support the right to choose, that abortion is a medically safe procedure, and that access to reproductive health care provides women with greater economic opportunities;

**WHEREAS**, the Supreme Court's decision to overturn Roe v. Wade and a women's right to choose, is in stark contrast to the 61% of U.S. adults who say abortions should be legal in all or most according to a June 13, 2022, report of the Pew Research Center;

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the International Association of Official Human Rights Agencies (IAOHRA) encourages the executive and legislative branches of the United States to:

1. Ensure that all women can access comprehensive, unbiased information and make their own health care decision.
2. Ensure that all women have access to comprehensive, affordable reproductive health care, regardless of the State in which they reside.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the International Association of Official Human Rights Agencies (IAOHRA),

1. Urges all to join its efforts in safeguarding and promoting access to reproductive healthcare and abortion rights, and pass resolution urging legislatures to take steps necessary to protect and promote reproductive health and abortion rights, instead restricting them.

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2. That IAQHRA is hereby authorized and directed to transmit a copy of this Resolution to all federal and state elected officials as it deems appropriate.

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**Robin S. Toma, President IAQHRA**

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**RESOLUTION # 5**

**Adopted by the  
INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF OFFICIAL HUMAN RIGHTS  
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**TITLE:** Restorative Justice/Criminal Justice Reform

**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**, IA OHRA'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**, the United States has the highest incarceration rate in the world, holding approximately 2.3 million people in prisons and jails on any given day: and

**WHEREAS**, the number of people incarcerated has increased almost eight times since 1980, largely as a result of the "War on Drugs" and "tough on crime" policies created in the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s; and

**WHEREAS**, even after release from prison, collateral consequences make it extremely difficult for people to reenter society successfully; and

**WHEREAS**, African Americans and Latinos make up approximately 30 percent of the nation's population but almost 60 percent of prisoners; and

**WHEREAS**, unless current trends change, one in three African American male babies born today will become incarcerated at some point in his life; and

**WHEREAS**, approximately 5.85 million people, including one in thirteen African Americans in the United States, cannot vote as a result of laws that disenfranchise people with felony convictions: and

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**WHEREAS**, laws, policies, and practices throughout the criminal justice system, including racial profiling and disproportionate application of mandatory minimums, have resulted in African Americans and Latinos being much more likely to be stopped, arrested, and charged with crimes, as well as more likely to serve longer prison sentences for the same crimes as whites; and

**WHEREAS**, recent police-involved fatalities of unarmed African American boys have brought issues of police reform into the national spotlight; and

**WHEREAS**, the men and women who go into law enforcement perform very significant responsibilities, under difficult and often dangerous circumstances, including enforcing our nation's laws, preserving the peace, and preventing and responding to crime and terrorism, while adhering to the Constitution; and

**WHEREAS**, police are able to do their jobs most effectively when there is trust between them and the communities they serve and protect; and

**WHEREAS**, studies show that diverse police departments have an easier time building bridges with communities; and

**WHEREAS**, as a leader in promoting civil rights and equality, and as the largest non-governmental trainer of law enforcement on issues of hate crimes, extremism, domestic and international terrorism, and ethics and core values, human rights agencies are uniquely positioned to assist in addressing issues affecting the relationship and trust between law enforcement and the people and communities they serve; and

**WHEREAS**, the International Association of Official Human Rights Agencies (IAOHRA) has been working to dismantle the school-to-prison pipeline, a phenomenon in which harsh school discipline policies that include suspensions and expulsions often lead students to drop out of school and ultimately become entangled in the criminal justice system, increasing the education gap in the United States because students of color are much more likely to be suspended or expelled than their peers; and

**WHEREAS**, there are multiple proposals at the federal and state levels to reform criminal justice and police policies, including reforming pretrial detention; adopting alternatives to arrest and incarceration for minor, non-violent offenses; appointing special prosecutors in cases of police involvement in fatalities of unarmed civilians and allegations of serious police misconduct; requiring law

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enforcement officers to wear body cameras; expanding FBI and Justice Department data collection on police use of lethal force; providing treatment, rather than incarceration, for substance abuse and mental health; limiting mandatory minimum sentences to the most serious offenses; ensuring fairness in the selection of jurors and grand jurors; focusing prisons on rehabilitation efforts; and promoting best practices to ease reentry and reduce recidivism;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the International Association of Official Human Rights Agencies (IAOHRA) supports efforts such as those mentioned in the preceding paragraphs that prove to be effective to reduce mass incarceration, oppose racism, reform practices that disproportionately impact communities of color, create safe environments for all communities, and build trust between law enforcement and the communities they serve and protect; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the International Association of Official Human Rights Agencies (IAOHRA) will work with the Department of Justice, national and local law enforcement organizations, civil rights groups, and communities to develop and promote community policing best practices—including expanded training and outreach programs to promote an inclusive, diverse and effective police force that better reflects the racial, ethnic, and religious communities it serves and protects.

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**Robin S. Toma, President IA OHRA**



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**RESOLUTION # 6**

**Adopted by the  
INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF OFFICIAL HUMAN RIGHTS  
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**TITLE:** Preventing Gun Violence

**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**, IA OHRA'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;" expressing the International Association of Official Human Rights Agencies (IAOHRA) that Congress must enact greater safety requirements on guns to prevent the death and injury caused by the use of firearms and,

**Whereas**, individuals with guns injure more than 100,000 people a year and kill more than 30,000 a year including through homicides, suicides, and accidental deaths; and whereas far more Americans have been killed with guns in the U.S. than have died in all our wars combined;

**Whereas**, America has now suffered more than 60 shooting massacres over the past 30 years, including twelve in 2012, and the recent tragedy at Robb Elementary School in which 20 first-graders and six educators were shot down;

**Whereas**, America's schools and colleges remain vulnerable without our focus on enhanced school safety;

**Whereas**, there are minimal safety requirements on the type of weapons available for purchase by private individuals in America, including military-style assault weapons;

**Whereas**, only federally licensed gun dealers are required by law to run background checks yet 40 percent of gun sales – six million guns a year – are sold

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on the secondary market through unlicensed dealers and are not subject to background checks, enabling the acquisition of guns by criminals, perpetrators of domestic violence, minors, substance abusers, and those with severe mental illnesses that are determined by a healthcare professional to be a danger to themselves or others;

**Whereas**, persons on the U.S. government’s terrorist watch list are legally able to purchase guns through unlicensed dealers on the secondary market;

**Whereas**, in 2011, the House of Representatives passed H.R. 822, the *National Right-to-Carry Reciprocity Act*, which allows persons to carry concealed weapons across state lines, regardless of state law;

**Whereas**, our country continues to severely underfund the National Instant Criminal Background Check System and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives – resulting in an incomplete background database that hasn’t expanded to all fifty states and a severe lack of resources that prevent the Bureau from conducting yearly inspections, as mandated by federal law, of all federally licensed gun dealers.

**Whereas**, law enforcement personnel are restricted from fully tracking gun purchase, use, and sale due to the presence of the Tiahrt Amendments, making it harder for law enforcement to aggressively pursue criminals who use illegal guns and track the movement of guns used in crimes.

**Whereas**, the explosion of gun sales in America has come at a time of a nationwide decline in mental health services with \$1.6 billion in state cuts from mental health programs between 2009 and 2011;

**Whereas**, nearly two-thirds of Americans agree that we should ban the sale of assault weapons as well as high-capacity magazines or clips that can hold more than 10, 30, 50, or 100 bullets at a time;

**Whereas**, the large majority of Americans support requiring all gun buyers to pass a criminal background check, no matter where they purchase the weapon or from whom they buy it;

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Resolved, that it is the International Association of Official Human Rights Agencies (IAOHRA) that, at a minimum, greater safety requirements must be implemented to prevent the violent use of guns in America by—

1. **Banning the sale of military-style assault weapons as well as high-capacity magazines or clips that can hold more than 10 bullets at a time;**
2. **Requiring all gun buyers to pass a criminal background check, no matter how they purchase the weapon; and,**
3. **Supporting the availability and funding of mental health and substance abuse treatment so all individuals who need help have sufficient access to these services, and the support of enhanced mental health services for children.**

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**Robin S. Toma, President IA OHRA**

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**RESOLUTION # 7**

**Adopted by the**  
**INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF OFFICIAL HUMAN RIGHTS**  
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**TITLE:** Missing Indigenous Women/Human Trafficking

**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**, IA OHRA'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**, human trafficking is a human rights violation, especially in the sex trade, slavery, and involuntary servitude defined as the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring, or receipt of persons, by means of threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, or fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation; and

**WHEREAS**, globally and in the United States human trafficking, especially sex trafficking, disproportionately affects women and girls; and

**WHEREAS**, human trafficking also affects other highly vulnerable populations to human trafficking, including but not limited to the missing indigenous women, the economically vulnerable, persons with disabilities, and runaway youth, with disproportionate vulnerability for youth who identify as gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender.

**WHEREAS**, there is a need for the United States to continue to strengthen a domestic and transnational agenda to combat human trafficking (U.S. Department of State, 2015); and

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**WHEREAS**, victims of human trafficking in the United States have been identified in multiple legal and illicit industries, and practicing psychologists may interact directly (e.g. health care centers, substance abuse recovery programs) or indirectly (e.g. organizational psychologists consulting with businesses that are at high risk for trafficking) with these victims; and

**WHEREAS**, practicing psychologists also may interact with populations identified as being at the highest risk for human trafficking in the United States, such as children in the child welfare and juvenile justice systems, and many other hard-to-detect “hidden” vulnerable populations; and

**WHEREAS**, increasingly, since the passage of the Trafficking Victim's Protection Act (2000), the need to define non-violent forms of psychological coercion exists to support U.S. law enforcement's increasing number of human trafficking investigations and prosecutions; and

**WHEREAS**, there is consensus in the United States that existing anti-trafficking laws have only partially protected victims of human trafficking; and

**WHEREAS**, in the United States anti-trafficking task forces need resources to increase their ability to work effectively across multiple disciplines (Office for Victims of Crime & Bureau of Justice Assistance, 2011); and

**WHEREAS**, health and social service providers need training and tools to identify and attend to victims effectively; and

**WHEREAS**, public awareness about human trafficking still needs to reach broader communities and communicate more information about the nuances of this crime; and

**WHEREAS**, promising evidence exists that suggests that addressing sex buying in the United States may reduce rates of sex trafficking; and

**WHEREAS**, there are limited studies in the United States on the profile of traffickers and their unique pattern(s) of perpetration and sometimes use, in addition to physical violence and sexual assault other, non-violent, forms of manipulation and psychological coercion; and

**WHEREAS**, human trafficking exposes victims to physical, sexual, and psychological abuse that incur serious and complex health and psychological consequences.

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**WHEREAS** relationally focused, trauma-sensitive, and culturally attuned approaches delivered within a social-ecological framework to treat the complex psychological consequences of human trafficking are needed; and

WHEREAS, prevention programs addressing human trafficking and re-trafficking are needed for those in health care, in schools, and other community venues is required to educate the public; and

**WHEREAS**, in the United States there is still a limited research base to understand the multiple factors related to human trafficking, and an urgent need exists to collect data on human trafficking to determine a global estimate of victims and explore its causes and psychological consequences despite the enormous challenges involved in conducting such research;

**WHEREAS**, one of the global recommendations for conducting human trafficking research is to support small and methodologically strong studies to identify the more nuanced characteristics of human trafficking

**BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED** that the International Association of Official Human Rights Agencies (IAOHRA: Continues in its commitment to educate the public, promote awareness, and disseminate research findings to the general public, professionals working with at-risk populations, and professionals engaged in research about consumers, traffickers, and trafficked persons;

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the International Association of Official Human Rights Agencies (IAOHRA) would address gaps in knowledge related to human trafficking address the following gaps in knowledge related to human trafficking:

- The risk and protective factors related to all victims of human trafficking in the United States with a particular focus on the most vulnerable populations such as the missing indigenous women, other women and girls;
- The strengthening of transnational collaborations between professionals and organizations participating in global anti-trafficking efforts;
- The impact of societal biases on providing services to survivors;
- The psychology of traffickers and trafficked persons;
- The impact of psychological trauma as a contributor and consequence of human trafficking;
- The nature of all forms of human trafficking (e.g. sex trafficking, labor trafficking);

**2022 IAOHRA CONFERENCE**

**August 17, 2022**

**Los Angeles, CA**

**RESOLUTIONS**

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the International Association of Official Human Rights Agencies (IAOHRA) encourages existing legislation and policies including an increased focus on protecting the human rights of trafficked persons and non-criminalization of such persons.

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**Robin S. Toma, President IA OHRA**