

1 Introduced by Council Member Brown:
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4 **RESOLUTION 2014-453-A**

5 A RESOLUTION EXPRESSING THE CITY COUNCIL OF
6 JACKSONVILLE’S INTENT TO DECLARE THAT FREEDOM
7 FROM RELATIONSHIP VIOLENCE IS A UNIVERSAL
8 HUMAN RIGHT.
9

10 **WHEREAS**, the City Council of Jacksonville, Florida seeks to
11 enhance the public welfare by declaring that the protection against
12 relationship violence is a fundamental human right; and

13 **WHEREAS**, world leaders and leaders within the United States
14 recognize that relationship violence is a human rights concern; and

15 **WHEREAS**, in 2011, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on
16 Violence against Women identified several deficiencies in the
17 regulation of relationship violence in the United States, and has
18 urged the United States government to re-evaluate existing
19 mechanisms for protecting victims and punishing abusers at federal,
20 state, and local levels, given that calls for help often do not
21 result in either arrests or successful prosecutions; and

22 **WHEREAS**, in 2011, the Inter-American Commission on Human
23 Rights found in *Jessica Lenahan (Gonzales) v. United States* that
24 the United States’ failure to protect women from gender-based
25 violence constitutes discrimination and a human rights violation,
26 and urged the United States to enact law and policy reforms to
27 protect victims of relationship violence and their children; and

28 **WHEREAS**, relationship violence affects individuals and
29 families from every race, gender, age, walk of life; and

30 **WHEREAS**, more than 1 in 3 women and more than 1 in 4 men in
31 the United States will experience rape, physical violence, and/or

1 stalking by an intimate partner; and

2 **WHEREAS**, every 9 to 15 seconds a woman is battered in the
3 United States, and every 2.5 minutes someone is sexually assaulted
4 in the United States; and

5 **WHEREAS**, there were 108,046 relationship violence incidents
6 reported in 2012 in the state of Florida; and

7 **WHEREAS**, there were 6,970 incidents of relationship violence
8 reported in 2012 in Duval County; and

9 **WHEREAS**, survivors of relationship violence experience
10 physical injuries, long-term psychological damage, financial
11 instability, and difficulty finding safe housing; and

12 **WHEREAS**, children are always negatively impacted by violence
13 in the home, whether they are physically or verbally abused
14 themselves or simply witness the violence; and

15 **WHEREAS**, 30% to 60% of perpetrators of intimate partner
16 violence also abuse children in the household; and

17 **WHEREAS**, relationship violence is chronically underreported,
18 and statistics from the National Coalition Against Domestic
19 Violence show that only 1 out of 3 cases is ever reported; and

20 **WHEREAS**, police and sheriff's departments, courts, cities,
21 counties, social service agencies, and other local government
22 entities constitute the first line of defense against relationship
23 violence; and

24 **WHEREAS**, by recognizing that relationship violence is a human
25 rights issue, the City of Jacksonville will raise awareness and
26 enhance relationship violence education in communities, the public
27 and private sectors, and within government agencies; now,
28 therefore,

29 **BE IT RESOLVED** by the Council of the City of Jacksonville,
30 Florida:

1 The Council hereby joins world leaders and leaders within the
2 United States in recognition of relationship violence as a human
3 rights concern and declares that the freedom from relationship
4 violence is a universal human right.

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6 This Resolution shall serve as a declaration to assure the citizens
7 of the City that state and local governments bear a moral
8 responsibility to secure this human right on behalf on their
9 residents.

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11 This Resolution expresses the need to re-evaluate current laws and
12 policies to ensure that such measures are providing the utmost care
13 and concern for victims of relationship violence and their
14 children, and thus also calls on other local, state and national
15 governmental bodies to issue similar resolutions.

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17 This Resolution shall serve as a charge to all local government
18 agencies to incorporate these principles into their policies and
19 practices.

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21 **ADOPTED BY THE COUNCIL**

22 **August 12, 2014**

23 **/signed /**

24 **Clay Yarborough**

25 **Council President**

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27 **Attested by Cheryl L. Brown, Council Secretary**