

RESOLUTION URGING THE REPEAL OR REVISION OF CERTAIN SECTIONS OF USA PATRIOT ACT AND SIMILAR LEGISLATION

WHEREAS, the Village of Oak Park is proud of its long and distinguished tradition of protecting the civil rights and liberties of its residents;

WHEREAS, the Village of Oak Park has a diverse population, including immigrants and students, whose contributions to the community are vital to its economy, culture and civic character;

WHEREAS, federal, state and local governments should protect the public from terrorist attacks such as those that occurred on September 11, 2001, but should do so in a rational and deliberative fashion to ensure that any new security measure enhances public safety without impairing constitutional rights or infringing on civil liberties;

WHEREAS, government security measures that undermine fundamental rights do damage to the American institutions and values that the residents of the Village of Oak Park hold dear;

WHEREAS, the Board of the Village of Oak Park believes that there is no inherent conflict between national security and the preservation of liberty. Americans can be both safe and free;

WHEREAS, the preservation of fundamental rights and civil liberties is a pillar of American society and is essential to the well-being of our democracy, particularly during times of conflict when such rights, especially those of immigrants and ethnic minorities, may be threatened, intentionally or unintentionally, through false assertions of necessity in the name of national security or patriotic zeal;

WHEREAS, law enforcement and security measures that undermine fundamental rights do irreparable damage to American institutions and values of equal justice and freedom that the residents of the Village of Oak Park hold dear;

WHEREAS, federal policies adopted since September 11, 2001, including provisions in the USA PATRIOT ACT (Public Law 107-56) and related executive orders, regulations and actions, threaten fundamental rights;

WHEREAS, these new powers pose a threat to all citizens and pose a particular threat to the civil rights and liberties of those who are Arab, Muslim or of South Asian descent; and

WHEREAS, many other communities throughout the country have enacted resolutions reaffirming support for civil rights and civil liberties in the face of government policies that threaten these values, and demanding accountability from law enforcement agencies regarding their use of these new powers.

NOW THEREFORE, be it resolved that the President and Board of Trustees of the Village of Oak Park, County of Cook, State of Illinois, as follows:

SECTION 1: The Village of Oak Park affirms its strong support for fundamental constitutional rights and civil liberties and its opposition to federal measures that infringe upon them.

SECTION 2: That the Village of Oak Park, while opposing terrorism, insists that efforts to end terrorism not be waged at the expense of fundamental rights and civil liberties.

SECTION 3: The Village of Oak Park affirms its strong support for the rights of immigrants and opposes measures that single out individuals for legal scrutiny or enforcement activity based on their country of origin, religion, ethnicity or political beliefs.

SECTION 4: That the Village Clerk is hereby directed to communicate this Resolution to all Village Departments and employees, the Illinois Congregational Delegation, to all Human/Community Relations Commissions in the State of Illinois, the Governor and Attorney General of Illinois, the United States Attorney General, and the President of the United States.

SECTION 5: That the Village of Oak Park urges Congress to repeal or revise those sections of the U.S.A. Patriot Act that violate the constitution by allowing the federal government to engage in religious and racial profiling, the unencumbered invasion of privacy and the punishment of dissenters and to refrain from passing any further legislation that violates or unduly limits the civil rights and liberties guaranteed by the United States Constitution.

SECTION 6: That this Resolution shall be in full force and effect from and after its passage and approval in the manner provided by law.

ADOPTED this 1st day of December, 2003, pursuant to a roll call
vote as follows:

AYES:

NAYS:

ABSENT:

APPROVED by me this 1st day of December, 2003.

Joanne E. Trapani
Village President

ATTEST:

Sandra Sokol
Village Clerk