

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE APRIL 3, 2006

RESOLUTION ON THE STATUS OF UNDOCUMENTED WORKERS

Recommendation

Mayor Michael Di Biase recommends that the following resolution be adopted:

WHEREAS the Council of the City of Vaughan recognizes there is a shortage of trade, skilled and general workers in the construction and other employment sectors;

AND WHEREAS this labour shortage has led to the widespread practice of employing undocumented workers;

AND WHEREAS the majority of undocumented workers work hard to build a better life for themselves and their families and, despite their lack of official status, make a valuable contribution to the overall prosperity of their communities;

AND WHEREAS the potential exists for the exploitation of undocumented workers who do not have the rights and freedoms enjoyed by all Canadians;

AND WHEREAS the pursuit and deportation of undocumented workers does not address the root causes of current labour shortages which are negatively impacting the long-term viability of the Canadian economy;

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Council of the City of Vaughan requests the Federal Minister of Citizenship and Immigration to normalize the legal status of undocumented workers, based on strict eligibility criteria, in a timely and equitable manner;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT City Council supports an immediate moratorium on the deportation of undocumented workers, pending a comprehensive review of current practices;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT City Council directs the City Clerk to communicate this resolution to Prime Minister Stephen Harper; the Federal Minister of Citizenship and Immigration the Honourable Monte Solberg; the Federal Minister of Labour the Honourable Jean-Pierre Blackburn; the Honourable Maurizio Bevilacqua, MP, Vaughan; Susan Kadis, MP, Thornhill; the Honourable Dalton McGuinty, Premier of Ontario; the Honourable Joe Cordiano, Minister of Economic Development and Trade; the Honourable Mike Colle, Minister of Citizenship and Immigration; the Honourable Steve Peters, Minister of Labour; Greg Sorbara, MPP, Vaughan-King-Aurora; Mario G. Racco, MPP, Thornhill; all area municipalities and copy Mr. Tony Dionisio, Union Local 183 and Ucal Powell, Carpenter's Local Union 27.

Economic Impact

There are no requirements for new funding associated with this resolution.

Purpose

To adopt a Council resolution that reaffirms the City of Vaughan's commitment to sustainable growth and a diverse local economy, and in recognition of the valuable contributions made by immigrant workers to Canada, by supporting progressive immigration policies and the legal protection of all workers.

Background - Analysis and Options

This Council resolution is intended to address the concerns of residents, local businesses and worker organizations about recently-ordered deportations of undocumented workers and the potential disruptive effect this could have on the local economy. In particular, Mr. Tony Dionisio, of Local 183 of the Labourer's International Union Of North America has requested that the City make a statement in support of resolving the plight of undocumented workers. The L.I.U.N.A. Local 183 Training Centre is located on Huntington Road in Vaughan.

Relationship to Vaughan Vision 2007

This report is consistent with the priorities previously set by Council and complies with the Vaughan Vision goal to strengthen relationships with other government authorities and agencies by establishing a position of "advocacy" for Vaughan's priorities with other levels of government (5.3.2).

Conclusion

Council adoption of this resolution will support the efforts of various groups to resolve the long-standing problem of undocumented workers in Canada.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Di Biase
Mayor