



KING COUNTY

1200 King County Courthouse
516 Third Avenue
Seattle, WA 98104

Signature Report

Motion 16848

Proposed No. 2025-0173.2

Sponsors Mosqueda, Dembowski, Barón,
Quinn and Balducci

1 A MOTION regarding the council's commitment to
2 welcoming and actively supporting immigrants and
3 refugees, and requesting a report evaluating the county's
4 progress towards that commitment.

5 WHEREAS, according to the 2023 American Community Survey conducted by
6 the United States Census Bureau, King County is home to approximately five hundred
7 eighty-six thousand foreign-born residents from every corner of the world totaling over a
8 quarter of the county's population, and

9 WHEREAS, immigrants and refugees enhance the county's cultural richness and
10 economic vitality with, according to a 2020 report from the Keep Washington Working
11 workgroup, immigrant-owned businesses in Washington state generating over \$2.3
12 billion in annual revenue and creating thousands of jobs, and immigrant households
13 across the state paying an estimated \$9.7 billion in federal taxes and \$3.9 billion in state
14 taxes, and

15 WHEREAS, many immigrant residents of King County, including those who are
16 not currently able to obtain lawful permanent residence, or live in mixed-status families,
17 may be fearful for their lives due to federal anti-immigration laws and are especially
18 vulnerable to discrimination, hate crimes, racial profiling, and deportation, and

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19 WHEREAS, King County seeks to provide all of its residents fair and equal
 20 access to services, opportunities, and protection irrespective of origins or immigrant or
 21 refugee status, and

22 WHEREAS, in 2009, King County enacted Ordinance 16692 prohibiting a county
 23 office, department, employee, agency, or agent from using the citizenship or immigration
 24 status of any individual to condition the provision of county services, except where
 25 required by federal law, and also prohibiting the sheriff's office from requesting specific
 26 documents relating to a person's civil immigration status for the sole purpose of
 27 determining whether the individual has violated federal civil immigration laws, and

28 WHEREAS, in 2010, King County enacted Ordinance 16948, known as the
 29 "Equity and Social Justice Ordinance", which used the countywide strategic plan's
 30 principle of "fair and just" to integrate equity and social justice into all the county does in
 31 order to achieve equitable opportunities for all people and communities, and

32 WHEREAS, in 2014, King County enacted Ordinance 17886 ending the honoring
 33 of civil immigration hold requests from the United States Immigration and Customs
 34 Enforcement for individuals in the custody of the department of adult and juvenile
 35 detention, and

36 WHEREAS, in 2017, King County enacted Ordinance 18499 appropriating
 37 \$750,000 to address issues affecting immigrant and refugee communities, which
 38 included: providing culturally specific support services; shoring up funding for the
 39 Resilience Fund, which is a collaborative with the Seattle Foundation, the city of Seattle,
 40 and other organizations to provide timely, flexible funding to address urgent needs of
 41 immigrant and refugee populations; and funding legal defense for immigrants with

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42 limited financial resources, and later that same year enacted Ordinance 18544 to
43 appropriate an additional \$250,000 to support legal defense for immigrants with limited
44 financial resources, and

45 WHEREAS, support services for immigrants and refugees have become an
46 ongoing investment supported by the veterans, seniors, and human services levy
47 approved by the voters in 2017, and again in 2023, and

48 WHEREAS, in 2017, King County enacted Ordinance 18653 establishing the
49 immigrant and refugee commission so the county can better serve its immigrant and
50 refugee communities, including many who have come to King County because they have
51 been persecuted or feared they would be persecuted on account of race, ethnicity,
52 religion, nationality, or membership in a particular social or political group, and

53 WHEREAS, in 2017, King County enacted Ordinance 18665 establishing
54 requirements for how county agencies, offices, and employees will provide services to
55 immigrants; requiring all county agencies to develop plans to provide communications
56 and vital documents in the top six non-English languages used in King County as
57 identified by the office of equity and racial and social justice and the county
58 demographer; and establishing an immigrant and refugee assistance fund to provide legal
59 representation for indigent immigrants and refugees in deportation proceedings in
60 immigration court and to support citizenship services for these residents and for English
61 language classes for immigrants and refugees, and

62 WHEREAS, Chapter 440, Laws of 2019, known as the Keep Washington
63 Working Act, in part, restricts the extent to which local law enforcement agencies may
64 participate in the enforcement of federal immigration laws, and

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65 WHEREAS, Chapter 37, Laws of Washington 2020, the Courts Open to All Act,
66 among other protections for immigrants and refugees interacting with the court system,
67 prohibits judges, court staff, prosecutors, prosecutor's office staff, and court security
68 personnel from inquiring into or collecting information about an individual's immigration
69 or citizenship status or place of birth, and from disclosing nonpublic personal information
70 to immigration authorities, except as required by law, and

71 WHEREAS, the Washington state Attorney General's Office has issued model
72 policies and recommendations to help public institutions comply with Washington laws
73 limiting state and local participation in immigration enforcement activity, and

74 WHEREAS, in 2022, the council passed Motion 16106 declaring support for the
75 Cities for Citizenship initiative and directing the executive to sign the county onto the
76 initiative as a participating community, and

77 WHEREAS, in 2024, King County enacted Ordinance 19770 establishing a
78 human and civil rights commission intended to strengthen the county's anti-
79 discrimination policies and protections, ensure equitable allocation of county resources,
80 and engage robustly with diverse communities in the county, and will include a
81 representative who is active and engaged with one or more immigrant or refugee
82 communities, and

83 WHEREAS, King County recognizes that immigrant and refugee women,
84 LGBTQIA+ individuals, and gender-diverse people face unique, intersecting barriers to
85 safety, economic opportunity, and digital inclusion, and commits to gender justice and
86 advancing the needs of survivors of gender-based violence, which is recognized as a push
87 factor of migration, and

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88 WHEREAS, King County is committed to continue building a welcoming, safe,
 89 and hate-free environment in communities, where all immigrants and refugees are
 90 welcomed, accepted, and valued, and encourages business leaders, civic groups,
 91 community institutions, and residents to join in a communitywide effort to adopt policies
 92 and practices that promote belonging, inclusion, and equity;

93 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT MOVED by the Council of King County:

94 A. The council remains committed to welcoming and actively supporting
 95 immigrants and refugees from all nationalities, religions, ethnicities, gender identities,
 96 sexual orientations, races, and backgrounds, regardless of political preference, with
 97 policies, codesigned programs, and dedicated resources that foster inclusion, meaningful
 98 participation, and economic opportunity for all, in partnership with immigrant-led
 99 organizations, ensuring services are trauma-informed and culturally competent.

100 B. In alignment with the Keep Washington Working Act, it is the intent of the
 101 council to consider legislation to ensure that no county department, employee, agent,
 102 contractor, or third-party, may use county funds, facilities, property, equipment,
 103 technology, systems, databases, or personnel to investigate, data-share, enforce,
 104 cooperate with, or assist in the investigation or enforcement of any federal registration or
 105 surveillance programs or any other laws, rules, or policies that target King County
 106 residents solely on the basis of race, religion, immigration, or citizenship status, or
 107 national or ethnic origin.

108 C. The council values the executive's partnership in supporting immigrants and
 109 refugees in King County and respectfully requests the executive do the following:

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110 1. Post signage, or otherwise clearly designate areas in all county facilities that
 111 are not open to the public, or areas open only for a limited specific purpose, to assist
 112 county employees in implementing K.C.C. 2.15.020, which requires employees to
 113 immediately refer warrantless attempts or requests for access to county facilities,
 114 property, equipment or nonpublic databases, or nonpublic portions of otherwise public
 115 databases, or people in King County's custody to the department or agency director;

116 2. Create and regularly update a centralized county webpage with links to
 117 county and external resources related to immigration issues for residents, including
 118 information on civil liberties and constitutional rights, to increase access to timely
 119 information and diminish disinformation. Resources should be vetted for accuracy and
 120 currency and be offered in multiple languages, including the top six languages identified
 121 by the tier map of limited-English-proficient persons maintained by the office of equity
 122 and racial and social justice and the county demographer; and

123 3. Consider increasing staffing for the office of equity and racial and social
 124 justice to enhance outreach to and engagement with immigrant and refugee communities
 125 and request the language access team within the office to work with necessary
 126 stakeholders to ensure all public safety, victim support, and legal navigation resources are
 127 available digitally and in multiple languages, with special attention to the needs of
 128 women and non-binary people experiencing violence or discrimination.

129 D. The council supports the superior court, district court, and prosecuting
 130 attorney's efforts to fully comply with the Courts Open to All Act and other relevant state
 131 law and encourages the implementation of policies and practices that endeavor to prevent
 132 or mitigate immigration consequences for immigrants and refugees at all stages of the

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133 criminal legal process, and take into consideration whether noncitizen residents may face
134 harsher punishments than United States citizens solely due to their immigration status.

135 E. The council supports the King County department of elections in continuing to
136 utilize best practices to keep our voting systems accessible to voting-eligible residents
137 from immigrant backgrounds and multi-lingual voters.

138 F. The council fully backs the county's efforts to monitor federal actions that may
139 target immigrant communities and prepare legal strategies in response, including
140 partnering across jurisdictions and with community organizations. The council will
141 consider allocating additional resources to support this critical work.

142 G. The council commits to expanding investments in the county's efforts to
143 support immigrants and refugees, including, but not limited to: deportation defense,
144 rapid response efforts coordinated with local city and Washington state agencies,
145 citizenship programs, English language learning and workforce development programs,
146 language access, mental and physical health services, food security, and investments to
147 combat displacement as well as "know your rights" trainings for county staff, contracted
148 community organizations, and immigrants and refugees.

149 H. The council reaffirms its commitment to ensuring that the county is in full
150 compliance with the Keep Washington Working Act, the Courts Open to All Act, and
151 K.C.C. chapter 2.15. The council supports the efforts of elected officials and staff in
152 local jurisdictions within the county and throughout Washington state in complying with
153 the state laws, developing policies, and expanding resources and funding to further
154 protect populations whose rights may be abrogated and interests harmed by the federal
155 government, including, but not limited to, immigrants and refugees.

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156 I. The council condemns President Trump's deployment of federalized National
 157 Guard and federal troops into the city of Los Angeles, which violates both federal statutes
 158 and the United States Constitution. The council respectfully requests the Washington
 159 state Congressional delegation take steps to exercise oversight of the deployment of
 160 federalized troops, rescind the deployment order, and withdraw military troops from our
 161 communities.

162 J. The council requests that the executive file a report evaluating the county's
 163 progress in implementing section C of this motion within one year of this motion's
 164 passage. The executive should consult with the immigrant and refugee commission and
 165 community-based organizations contracted by the county to provide services to
 166 immigrant and refugee communities when drafting the report. The report should be filed
 167 in the form of an electronic copy with the clerk of the council, who shall retain an

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- 168 electronic copy and provide an electronic copy to all councilmembers, the council chief
169 of staff, and the lead staff for the committee of the whole, or its successor.

Motion 16848 was introduced on 6/17/2025 and passed by the Metropolitan King County Council on 7/15/2025, by the following vote:

Yes: 8 - Balducci, Barón, Dembowski, Mosqueda, Perry, Quinn,
von Reichbauer and Zahilay

No: 1 - Dunn

KING COUNTY COUNCIL
KING COUNTY, WASHINGTON

Signed by:

Girmay Zahilay

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Girmay Zahilay, Chair

ATTEST:

DocuSigned by:

Melani Hay

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Melani Hay, Clerk of the Council

Attachments: None

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Council Chair

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Melani Hay

melani.hay@kingcounty.gov

Clerk of the Council

King County Council

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Certified Delivered	Security Checked	7/16/2025 11:46:14 AM
Signing Complete	Security Checked	7/16/2025 11:46:25 AM
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