



**DATE:** September 26, 2017

**CATEGORY:** Items Initiated by Council

**DEPT.:** City Council

**TITLE:** **Appointment of Council Representative to the International Institute of Human Rights**

### **RECOMMENDATION**

Direct the Mayor to appoint a Councilmember to the Steering Committee or Board of Directors of the International Institute for Human Rights Learning.

### **DISCUSSION**

In December 2016, City Council adopted a resolution declaring Mountain View a Human Rights City. The number of Human Right Cities throughout the world is relatively small at 33. Eleven (11) are in the United States. Human Rights Cities represent an important innovation in the human rights movement, as they engage local activists in the work of translating and implementing international human rights in local settings. Human Rights Cities help create an infrastructure for the universal realization of the full spectrum of human rights by deepening democracy and promoting social justice.

One way to “spread the word” of Human Rights is to create an institute dedicated to the task of Human Rights Learning. This institute is presently in the process of being founded in conjunction with the People’s Movement for Human Rights Learning (PDHRE—formerly known as the People’s Decade for Human Rights Education). I have been in regular contact with the group, and those involved with this effort, led by Shulamith (Shula) Koenig. We have identified Mountain View as an ideal location for the global headquarters of the new International Institute for Human Rights Learning (IIHRL). Mountain View is ideal because of proximity to international technology leaders such as Google, LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, Apple, etc. Within a few square miles, we have the technological capacity to communicate to the 7.5 billion citizens of the planet.

The concept of Human Rights Learning is not new, as the United Nations (UN) embarked on a decade of Human Rights Education from 1995 to 2004. Prior to that, Ms.

Koenig founded the PDHRE. In 2003, she was the recipient of the UN Prize in the field of Human Rights, an award also given to Eleanor Roosevelt, Jimmy Carter, Martin Luther King Jr., and Nelson Mandela. Ms. Koenig and her global team of advisors and I are working to make the dream of the IIHRL a reality in Mountain View. One of the Institute's primary goals is 100 Human Rights Cities across the world by 2023, the 75th anniversary of the adoption by the UN of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The IIHRL will not focus on human rights violations but rather on how human rights learning can be delivered to change cultures and behaviors at global, national, regional, and local levels to create an environment where human rights violations are reduced.

The IIHRL has a Steering Committee now and will create a Board of Directors later. As a Human Rights City and possible home to the Institute, it is important that a representative from the City government be a permanent member of the Board to showcase the partnership between the organizations. Presently, I am working with the Steering Committee of four. The Steering Committee (or Board) will grow as businesses, foundations, and individuals privately grant funds and the IIHRL further develop their business plan. City funding is not proposed at this time.

It is not expected that staff time would be needed to support this position.

### **ALTERNATIVES**

1. Do not vote to authorize the Mayor to appoint a Councilmember to the Board.
2. Authorize the Mayor to appoint a Councilmember to the Board.
3. Provide other direction.

**PUBLIC NOTICING** – Agenda posting.

Prepared by:

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Mayor

KSR/DHR/3/CAM  
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