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Title: WHEREAS, like the City of Pittsburgh, the nation of Cuba is home to prestigious and successful medical, public health, pharmaceutical, and life sciences research, having contributed heavily and with international regard to treatment regimens used in previous outbreaks of Ebola, Zika, Chikungunya, and other novel viruses; and

Sponsors: Corey O'Connor

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WHEREAS, like the City of Pittsburgh, the nation of Cuba is home to prestigious and successful medical, public health, pharmaceutical, and life sciences research, having contributed heavily and with international regard to treatment regimens used in previous outbreaks of Ebola, Zika, Chikungunya, and other novel viruses; and

WHEREAS, Cuba's response to the Covid-19 pandemic has been recognized internationally for its favorable fatality and recovery rates, including its use of the Cuba-produced drugs Biomodulina T, Heberon Interferon Akfa 2B human recombinant, Itolizumab, Jusvinza, and CIBG 258, as well as the Soberana 02 vaccine that's entering trials; and

WHEREAS, despite more than 42 countries currently in the process of acquiring or already having acquired pharmaceutical treatments for Covid-19 from Cuba, none have been made available to United States residents because of ongoing restrictions against collaboration with and imports from Cuba due to Trump Administration policies; and

WHEREAS, The City of Pittsburgh has been home to the Pittsburgh-Matanzas Sister Cities Partnership and has supported numerous resolutions encouraging friendship and mutual cooperation with the people of Cuba and several Pittsburgh-based academic, medical, and innovation institutions are now working individually and collaboratively to produce breakthrough treatments and medical approaches to best the devastating effects of the Covid-19 pandemic and its associated death rate; and

WHEREAS, recent proclamations and resolutions from cities such as Cleveland, Richmond, San Francisco, and more calling for the lifting of the U.S.-backed embargo on Cuba that has severely restricted cooperation on scientific and medical research speaks to the ongoing national awareness and work toward similar collaborative initiatives; and

WHEREAS, past City of Pittsburgh resolutions calling for the normalization of relationships between these two countries have been passed without opposition by Pittsburgh City Council; and

WHEREAS, the people of Pittsburgh and Pennsylvania - as well as those of the country at large and the international community - would benefit from U.S.-Cuban biopharmaceutical, medical, and public health collaboration and exchanges, with the ongoing joint country drug trials for lung cancer treatment currently being conducted at the Roswell Cancer Institute with past FDA approval in Buffalo, New York serving as an example.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Council of the City of Pittsburgh encourages local medical, health care, scientific, academic and pharmaceutical institutions to explore collaboration with their Cuban counterparts in knowledge transfer and joint collaboration in public health prevention methods, methods for preventing infection of health workers, innovative treatments, development of new treatments, vaccines and protocols between Pittsburgh and Cuban institutions; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Council appeals to the Pennsylvania General Assembly and Governor to actively pursue such exchanges, knowledge transfers, and collaboration, and further appeals to the federal government to do likewise while restoring diplomatic relations with Cuba, ending the decades-long economic blockade, and engaging in all mutually-beneficial areas of human endeavor.