



City of Pittsburgh

510 City-County Building
414 Grant Street
Pittsburgh, PA 15219

Text File

Introduced: 7/19/2016

Bill No: 2016-0665, **Version:** 1

Committee: City Council

Status: Adopted

WHEREAS, Cuba is a small island nation of 12 million citizens, and the U.S. blockade has had over these past 60 years a profound and tremendously negative impact on the people of Cuba, and its development as a nation; and,

WHEREAS, in October 2015 the United Nations General Assembly for the 24th year in a row voted to end the blockade of Cuba; and,

WHEREAS, in 1998, Pittsburgh City Council and Mayor signed an official twinning agreement with the people of Cuba and recognized Matanzas, Cuba as our official Sister City encouraging mutual engagement efforts between our local government officials, the University of Pittsburgh, Semester-at-Sea, Global Links, B'nai B'rith, IFCO Pastors for Peace, Thomas Merton Center and many other community organizations promoting friendship and camaraderie based in citizen diplomacy; and,

WHEREAS, on December 17, 2014, President Barack Obama and Cuban President Raul Castro announced a new era of relations which would reengage Cuba with respect for Cuba's sovereignty and establishment of diplomatic relations and eliminate all travel restrictions on U.S. residents, and open exchange of ideas, fair trade business opportunities, responsible investment, energy innovation, disaster cooperation, environmental management and innovative medical advances; and,

WHEREAS, the Pittsburgh-Matanzas Sister Cities Partnership sponsored a "Citizen Diplomacy" delegation to Cuba in November 2015 together with individuals representing community, cultural, academic, scientific, energy innovation, environmental sustainability, direct flights, sports and commerce, and reaffirmed Pittsburgh's dedication and continued commitment to build bridges of mutual benefit between our two countries; and,

WHEREAS, the City recently welcomed the Cuban Minister of Sports (INDER), Dr. Antonio Bacali; Lic. Marta Lidia Ruiz, INDER's Director of International Relations; Heriberto Suarez Pereda, Cuba's Boxing Commissioner and Head of Cuba's Federation of Boxing; and Lic. Judith Langaney, Specialist in Baseball and delegation official translator; in coordinated preparation for upcoming and future sports exchanges; and,

WHEREAS, the Pittsburgh-Matanzas Sister Cities Partnership and its member organization, the Hibernian Celtic Athletic Fund, are sponsoring a friendly match between Pittsburgh and Cuban non-professional youth; "Duelo Del Siglo - Duel of the Century"- Boxing on the Bridge on Saturday, July 30, 2016 on the Roberto Clemente Bridge; and,

WHEREAS, the event will be free and open to the public, giving thousands of Pittsburgh residents an opportunity to join in supporting friendships with the goal of having the event televised back to the people of

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Cuba, to jointly celebrate our Sister City relationship and the new U.S. policy possibilities for rapprochement with a youth sporting event and bring Cuba to Pittsburgh; and,

NOW THERE BE RESOLVED, that the Council of the City of Pittsburgh wishes to thank the organizations and businesses and our elected officials working together to host this unique historic sporting event focused on youth, and encourages all Pittsburghers to lend their full support in making this a truly great citywide event; and,

AND FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED, that the Council hereby declares Saturday, July 30, 2016 to be “**U.S. Cuba Friendship Day**” in the City of Pittsburgh.