



# CITY OF PITTSBURGH

*Commission on Human Relations*

414 Grant Street – Room 908, Pittsburgh, PA 15219-2464

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## **PRESS RELEASE**

**Dec 7, 2018**

### **FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:**

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### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Pittsburgh (PA)** - The City of Pittsburgh Commission on Human Relations (PghCHR) in collaboration with the Human Rights City Alliance, and the Gender Equity Commission will be holding a press conference to commemorate ***International Human Rights Day***, the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). Mayor Peduto and members of City Council will ***sign a proclamation re-committing themselves to making human rights*** a priority in policy and planning. The press conference will take place on **Monday, December 10, 2018 at 11:30am on the 5<sup>th</sup> floor of the City-County Building, 414 Grant Street.**

“As hate crimes are on the rise, civil discourse is deteriorating, and federal protections for civil rights are being eroded, it is more important than ever to uphold and enforce human rights on a local level. The Commission on Human Relations is proud to celebrate International Human Rights Day and the 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in Pittsburgh, where human rights are being actively reaffirmed” – Pittsburgh Commission on Human Relations Chair, Mariana Padias

In 2018, global displacement is at a record high, and both international migration and internal displacement are fueling xenophobia, anti-Semitism, and racism, which in turn undermine social solidarity and democracy. It is therefore extremely urgent that we mark this International Human Rights Day by reaffirming the values and principles of human rights. The UDHR provides a blueprint for building strong, resilient, and cohesive societies capable of addressing the critical challenges of our day.

Forced displacement locally and globally undermines community resiliency and solidarity. Pittsburgh’s immigrant and refugee communities face constant threats of deportation and harassment due to their status as people displaced from their homelands. And our city’s efforts to renew itself along traditional, market lines is exacerbating the long-standing affordable housing crisis, fueling the displacement of many residents each day. More than 20,000 African American residents have been displaced from Pittsburgh in recent decades due to rising housing costs, and we continue to lose an estimated three African American neighbors each day.

We gather to lift up the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as a guide to community action and public policy. In that spirit, we demand that our public officials take seriously their commitments to ending all forms of discrimination, advancing gender equity, and to making Pittsburgh a true “human rights city.” We have invited spokespeople from diverse constituencies in our city to give voice to the persistent gaps between our ideals and the realities experienced by too many people in our city. Human rights must be the foundation for governments, and we stand with our brothers and sisters worldwide to reaffirm our commitment to these values as we promise to work together to promote human rights learning in our communities and to make our city a place that reflects and defends them. Human rights begin at home, right here in this Human Rights City of Pittsburgh!

**Human Rights Day 2018**  
**Proclamation Re-affirming our City's Commitment to Human Rights Principles**

**WHEREAS**, December 10, 2018 marks the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR); and

**WHEREAS**, the recent worldwide rise of xenophobia, anti-Semitism, and racism present unprecedented challenges to the realization of human rights for all; and

**WHEREAS**, record global levels of displacement and international migration will require Pittsburgh and other cities to promote tolerance as we help accommodate the needs of displaced human beings; and

**WHEREAS**, cities and communities around the world have increasingly mobilized to implement human rights principles at the local level through "human rights city" and related initiatives; and

**WHEREAS**, in 1990, Pittsburgh passed an ordinance to protect the rights of persons based on sexual orientation; and

**WHEREAS**, in 2011, Pittsburgh became the fifth Human Rights City in the United States; and

**WHEREAS**, in 2014, Pittsburgh passed an ordinance to protect the rights of persons based on gender identity and expression; and

**WHEREAS**, the current federal government is attempting to re-introduce inequality in the gender spectrum by erasing transgender and gender expansive individuals, and;

**WHEREAS**, the cruel, unscientific, and immoral proposal to define transgender and gender expansive people out of existence will cause unspeakable harm, including the denial of basic civil rights and basic medical care, and;

**WHEREAS**, in 2016, Pittsburgh became the sixth city in the United States to pass a local ordinance to implement the International Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW); and

**WHEREAS**, the One Pittsburgh initiative promotes the UN Sustainable Development Goals including environmental sustainability, inclusion, diversity, and equity;

**WHEREAS**, the tragic murders of worshipers from the *Dor Hadash*, *New Light*, and *Tree of Life* Congregations earlier this year serve as a stark reminder of the importance of efforts to actively promote human rights learning and culture in our community;

**WHEREAS**, a government by and for the people must stand with its people, not delegitimize, discriminate, and assault various groups of them, and;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, hereby re-affirm our commitment to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the international and national body of laws that serve to implement these principles. Together with Pittsburgh residents, we commit ourselves to working to make our city a model for human rights, where there is dignity and justice for everyone.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Council of the City of Pittsburgh does hereby declare Monday, December 10<sup>th</sup>, 2018 to be "**Human Rights Day**" in the City of Pittsburgh.

Co-sponsored by Councilmembers Darlene M. Harris, Theresa Kail-Smith, Anthony Coghill, Corey O'Connor, R. Daniel Lavelle, Deb Gross, Erika Strassburger, and Rev. Ricky V. Burgess

Bruce A. Kraus  
President of Council

Attest: Brenda F. Pree  
Clerk of Council

In Council, July 10<sup>th</sup>, 2018