

RESOLUTION NO. \_\_\_\_\_

**A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF KEY WEST, FLORIDA, URGING THE FLORIDA LEGISLATURE TO DEFEAT HB 991/SB 1220, PERTAINING TO DEFAMATION CLAIMS, WHICH WOULD RESTRICT THE FIRST AMENDMENT RIGHTS OF FLORIDA RESIDENTS; DIRECTING THE CITY CLERK TO PROVIDE THIS RESOLUTION TO CERTAIN MEMBERS OF THE FLORIDA LEGISLATURE; PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE**

WHEREAS, Florida House Bill 991 and companion bill, Florida Senate Bill 1220 would expand the ability of plaintiffs to allege defamation, narrowly define who is a 'public figure,' and thereby place unreasonable restrictions on the right to free speech provided in the First Amendment to the United States Constitution; and

WHEREAS, among the proposed restrictions, HB 991 provides that a defendant (who is sued for defamation) cannot prove the truth of an allegation of discrimination by citing the plaintiff's religious or scientific beliefs; and

WHEREAS, HB 991 would also provide that a statement by an anonymous source is presumptively false; and

WHEREAS, HB 991 would inhibit the right to free speech by lowering the burden of proof required, to make it easier for any private citizen to sue for defamation; and

WHEREAS, the City Commission finds that HB 991/SB 1220 would have an adverse effect on the welfare of residents of the City of Key West, the State of Florida, and the United States; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF KEY WEST, FLORIDA AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1: That the Key West City Commission urges the Florida Legislature to defeat House Bill 991 and SB 1220.

Section 2: That the City Clerk is hereby authorized to transmit a certified copy of this Resolution to Governor Ron DeSantis, Representative Andrade (HB 991 Sponsor), and Representatives Beltran and Black (HB 991 Co-Introducers), Representative James "Jim" Mooney, Jr, Senator Brodeur (SB 1220 Sponsor), and Senator Ana Maria Rodriguez.

Section 3: That this Resolution shall go into effect immediately upon its passage and adoption and authentication by the signature of the Presiding Officer and the Clerk of the Commission.

Passed and adopted by the City Commission at a meeting held  
this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2023.

Authenticated by the Presiding Officer and Clerk of the  
Commission on \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2023.

Filed with the Clerk on \_\_\_\_\_, 2023.

Mayor Teri Johnston	_____
Vice Mayor Sam Kaufman	_____
Commissioner Lissette Carey	_____
Commissioner Mary Lou Hoover	_____
Commissioner Clayton Lopez	_____
Commissioner Billy Wardlow	_____
Commissioner Jimmy Weekley	_____

\_\_\_\_\_  
TERI JOHNSTON, MAYOR

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
CHERYL SMITH, CITY CLERK