



[Commission Name]

CONSENT CALENDAR

April 21, 2026

To: Honorable Mayor Ishii and Members of the Berkeley City Council
From: Peace and Justice Commission
Submitted by: Rev. Dwayne Phillips, Chairperson, Peace and Justice Commission
Subject: Reaffirm City of Berkeley Commitment to International Peace, Opposing War on Iran & Standing in Solidarity with the People of Iran

RECOMMENDATION

Adopt a Resolution reaffirming the commitment of City of Berkeley to international peace, opposing the war on Iran, an unconstitutional war initiated unilaterally by the U.S. president without congressional authorization and expressing solidarity with the people of Iran and their right to self-determination.

FISCAL IMPACTS OF RECOMMENDATION

No significant fiscal impact on the City.

CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS

On Saturday February 28, 2026, with negotiations underway between the United States and the Islamic Republic, the United States and Israel launched a major military campaign against Iran, prompting Iranian retaliatory strikes on U.S. bases in the region and on Israel. Within the first 48 hours scores of civilians were reported killed in Iran¹ as well as multiple American personnel² and Israeli civilians³. There is undoubtedly a high risk of expanding military mobilization, destabilization of global energy markets and elevated cybersecurity vulnerabilities, the effects of which will have domestic reverberations in the U.S.

At the March 9, 2026 meeting, the commission took the following action:

Action: M/S/C (Sani/Taylor) to adopt the following recommendation as amended: Adopt a Resolution reaffirming the commitment of City of Berkeley to international peace, opposing the war on Iran, an unconstitutional war initiated unilaterally by the U.S. president without congressional authorization and expressing solidarity with the people of Iran and their right to self-determination.

¹ Washington Post: [Reported airstrike hits Iranian girls' school](#)

² New York Times: [U.S. Military Death Toll Rises to 6](#)

³ BBC: [Nine dead in missile attack on Israel as Iran strikes region](#)

Ayes: Commissioners Phillips, Weisberg, Marasovic, Taylor, Sani, Morizawa, Lippman, McNeil and Press

Noes: Commissioner Lee

Abstain: Commissioners Yasavul, Fink, Elias and Mencher

Absent: Commissioner Cassidy

Excused: None

BACKGROUND

Beginning in late December 2025, massive nationwide anti-regime protests erupted in Iran, driven largely by a deepening economic crisis and rising prices. The protests, which included calls for regime change, became the largest in scale since the 1979 revolution. The response of the Iranian authorities was brutal and unprecedented. According to independent human rights monitors, the crackdown resulted, within a matter of two to three days (January 8 to 10) under total internet blackout, in thousands, and possibly tens of thousands of deaths and even more arrests, followed by arbitrary mass detention, torture, and intimidation of victims' families.⁴ As the protests swelled to a scale never before witnessed, Iran once again stood at a defining crossroads in its history. During this period, the Trump administration commenced preparations for a massive assault against Iran and launched joint U.S.-Israeli strikes on February 28th that is ongoing. The stated justification, "imminent Iranian threat," is refuted by senior U.S. defense officials and intelligence sources.⁵

The U.S.–Israel war on Iran has already unleashed severe humanitarian, social, and infrastructural devastation, with early reporting painting a picture of widespread civilian suffering and destabilization across the country and the region.⁶ Initial field data documented at least 333 civilian casualties in the first day alone, alongside extensive damage to homes, schools, and essential public infrastructure such as hospitals, educational centers and communications networks.⁷ Strikes on civilian sites have been especially catastrophic: one of the deadliest incidents within hours of the start of the war was the bombing of a girls' primary school in Minab, where more than 100 children were reportedly killed.⁸ The devastation and number of casualties are expected to rise on all sides in the coming days.

⁴ Amnesty International: [What happened at the protests in Iran?](#)

⁵ CNN: [Trump has claimed Iran is building missiles that could soon hit the US. Sources say that's not backed up by US intelligence](#); International Business Times: [Defense Officials Undercut 'Imminent Threat' Narrative, Say Iran Had No Pre-Strike Plans Against US](#).

⁶ United Nations: [Iran crisis: Nuclear watchdog urges restraint amid ongoing strikes](#)

⁷[The First Day of the U.S.–Israel and Iran War: Initial Report on the Scope of Attacks and Their Human Consequences](#).

⁸ [UNESCO: Deadly bombing of Iran primary school 'a grave violation of humanitarian law'](#)

The people of Iran have spent decades challenging authoritarian rule risking imprisonment, torture, and death for the chance to shape a freer and more dignified future. U.S. government intervention throughout these decades has made that struggle harder to sustain. From derailing Iran's democratic trajectory in the 1950's,⁹ to imposition of broad and indiscriminate sanctions that punish ordinary Iranians while fueling rampant corruption by state actors,¹⁰ to the bombings in June of 2025 and now full-scale military assault, the U.S. government policy toward Iran has exacerbated social and economic distress among ordinary citizens. And under a war of aggression waged against the country, the Iranian government weaponizes the crisis to brand dissent as treason, drives society into survival mode, and extinguishes demands for political and social reform. The Iranian people's struggle for freedom has never been passive or abstract; it has been lived through decades of protest, bloodshed, and extraordinary courage. But war shifts the terrain in favor of those who fear that freedom most.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE IMPACTS

None.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

Berkeley has long been a national symbol of principled resistance to unjust wars, and the Peace and Justice Commission was created precisely to ensure that this legacy guides the city's actions. Today, as an illegal war of aggression threatens the lives and liberties of not just millions in Iran and across the region but the lives of Americans serving in the military, the City Council is called to uphold that mandate.

Berkeley is home to a strong and vibrant Iranian American community numbering well over a thousand,¹¹ many of whom are experiencing deep distress as the war makes it difficult or impossible to reach loved ones back home, leaving many in a state of fear and uncertainty.

By taking a stand against this illegal and already deeply unpopular¹² war the City of Berkeley would not only honor Berkeley's history but also affirm solidarity with the Iranian people, whose decades-long struggle for freedom is being suffocated by conflict. A resolution from Berkeley would show that the City's commitments to peace and justice remain living values, not historical artifacts.

ALTERNATIVE ACTIONS CONSIDERED

None

⁹ The National Security Archive: [Mohammad Mosaddeq and the 1953 Coup in Iran](#)

¹⁰ Human Rights Watch: ["Maximum Pressure," US Economic Sanctions Harm Iranians' Right to Health](#)

¹¹ [Iranian Population in Alameda County, CA by City: 2025 Ranking & Insights](#)

¹² The Hill: [Just a quarter of Americans back Iran strikes: Poll](#)

CITY MANAGER

The City Manager takes no position on the content and recommendations of the Commission's Report.

CONTACT PERSON

Tasha Tervalon, Assistant to the City Manager, Commission Secretary, City Manager's Office, 510-981-5347

RESOLUTION NO. ##,###-N.S.

Opposing the War on Iran and Standing in Solidarity with the People of Iran

WHEREAS, the City of Berkeley has, for generations, stood firmly against wars of aggression and has consistently affirmed that peace, diplomacy, and respect for international law are essential to human dignity and global security; and

WHEREAS, on Saturday, February 28th, the United States launched strikes on Iran without prior Congressional approval; and

WHEREAS, this illegal declaration of war on Iran by President Trump is a direct violation of Article 2, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution; and

WHEREAS, this illegal war constitutes a unilateral act of aggression that has caused widespread civilian casualties, mass displacement, destruction of homes, schools, hospitals, cultural sites, and essential infrastructure, and has deepened an already severe humanitarian crisis affecting millions; and

WHEREAS, the people of Iran—who have endured decades of political repression, economic sanctions, and regional instability—are now suffering the devastating consequences of war, including shortages of food, medicine, clean water, and essential services, conditions that amount to collective punishment; and

WHEREAS, Article 2(4) of the United Nations Charter prohibits the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state, and the Nuremberg Principles, affirmed by the United States, define aggressive war as “the supreme international crime”; and

WHEREAS, the continuation of this war undermines the democratic rights and aspirations of the Iranian people, strengthens authoritarian repression, and obstructs the possibility of peaceful, just, and democratic change within Iran; and

WHEREAS, Iranian Americans in Berkeley and throughout the Bay Area are experiencing fear, grief, and trauma as their families and communities are directly affected by the war, and many face increased discrimination, surveillance, and xenophobia at home; and

WHEREAS, the City of Berkeley affirms that true security is achieved not through militarism, but through diplomacy, justice, human rights, and the protection of civilian life;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council of the City of Berkeley

Deems this unauthorized war waged by President Trump on Iran to be a violation of the United States Constitution, and calls for an immediate cessation of hostilities, withdrawal of U.S. forces, and an end to all military actions that endanger civilian populations.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Council urges the President, Congress, and all relevant federal agencies to pursue diplomacy, de-escalation, and multilateral conflict resolution, and to support humanitarian relief efforts for the people of Iran.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City of Berkeley stands in unwavering solidarity with the people of Iran in their pursuit of peace, justice, human rights, and self-determination, and affirms the rights and dignity of Iranian Americans in our community.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Clerk shall transmit copies of this resolution to the President of the United States, the Vice President, the Secretary of State, the Majority and Minority Leaders of the U.S. Senate, the Speaker and Minority Leader of the U.S. House of Representatives, and Berkeley's representatives in Congress.