



The City of York Pennsylvania

Office of City Council
101 S. George St.
York, PA 17401

Edquina Washington, President
Betsy Buckingham, Vice President
Dr. Felicia O. A. Dennis, Member
Elizabeth Bupp, Member
Teresa Johnescu, Member
Dianna L. Thompson, City Clerk
P: (717) 849-2246
F: (717) 812-0557
dthompso@yorkcity.org

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

York City Council to Consider Overriding Mayor's Veto of an Ordinance Establishing Article 156 "Welcoming and Access to Immigrants and Refugees."

(31 DEC 2024) York, PA - At its January 7, 2025, legislative meeting, York City Council will consider overriding Mayor Michael R. Helfrich's veto of [Bill No. 47, Ordinance No. 47](#) passed by City Council on December 17, 2024, which established Article 156 "Welcoming and Access to Immigrants and Refugees" of the City of York Codified Ordinances.

City Council's goal in adopting Ordinance No. 47 is to create an environment that embraces and promotes unity, diversity and inclusion among our growing immigrant and refugee community and to be a regional leader in advocating for all municipalities in Pennsylvania to adopt policies and procedures that assure the fair and equitable treatment of all people without regard to their refugee or immigration status. Furthermore, City Council wishes to build connections and trust collaboratively among residents, local government, businesses, faith-based communities and non-profits for a unified and strengthened community.

Ordinance No. 47 was approved by City Council at its December 17, 2024, meeting by a vote of 3-2 with Councilwomen Teresa Johnescu and Elizabeth Bupp being the dissenting votes. The Ordinance was returned and vetoed by Mayor Helfrich on December 27, 2024. In accordance with the 3rd Class City Code, Optional Charter Law, [Section 413\(a\)](#), Council may override the mayor's veto by a vote of two-thirds of its members (4 members).

City Council President Edquina Washington stated, "The legislative body of local government plays an important part in advocating for a welcoming environment by enacting legislation and providing the framework for the evolution of our community. We want to embrace our fellow citizens of all backgrounds regardless of race, color, ethnicity, religion, national origin, ancestry, or ability to speak English. I am extremely disappointed that Mayor Helfrich vetoed this legislation because he is more concerned about the possibility of losing funding when there is a bigger issue at play here. We are talking about protecting our immigrant and refugee citizens from the fear of being racially profiled because of their actual or perceived citizenship or immigration status while doing simple tasks like going to the store, taking their children to school, driving to work, or reporting a crime. Ordinance No. 47 offers protection for our immigrant and refugee community and drives home the fact that everyone belongs here, and you are welcomed here."

City Council will consider a resolution to override Mayor Helfrich's veto of Ordinance No. 47 at its January 7, 2025, legislative meeting, which begins at 6PM in City Council Chambers, 101 S. George St., York, PA.

Your coverage is invited.

Media Contact:

Dianna L. Thompson, York City Clerk
Phone: (717) 849-2246 | Email: dthompso@yorkcity.org