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RESOLUTION 2013-48

A RESOLUTION OF THE VILLAGE
COMMISSION OF THE VILLAGE OF BISCAYNE
PARK, FLORIDA, URGING AND ENCOURAGING
THE FLORIDA LEGISLATURE TO REPEAL ALL
LAWS WHICH DENY THE RESTORATION OF
VOTING RIGHTS; PROVIDING FOR AN
EFFECTIVE DATE

13 WHEREAS, on March 9, 2011, the Florida Rules of Executive Clemency were toughened, as
14 the automatic restoration of civil rights and the ability to vote was no longer granted for any convicted
15 criminal offense; and

16 WHEREAS, currently, all individuals convicted of any felony now need to apply for executive
17 clemency after a five-year waiting period, and individuals convicted of certain felonies, such as murder,
18 assault, child abuse, drug trafficking and arson are subject to a seven-year waiting period and a
19 clemency board hearing to determine whether or not the ability to vote will be restored; and

20 WHEREAS, in 2010, an estimated 5.85 million people in the United States could not vote due
21 to a felony conviction, an increase from the 2004 total of 5.26 million and the highest number since at
22 least 1960; and

23 WHEREAS, as of 2010, Florida has disenfranchised 1,541,602 citizens due to a felony
24 conviction, which amounts to the disenfranchisement of 10.42% of the state's voting age population
25 and 23.3% of Florida's African-American voting age population, the highest in the nation; and

26 WHEREAS, in 38 states, most felons get voting rights restored automatically upon completion
27 of his or her sentence, with some states making an exception for violent crimes; and

28 WHEREAS, once an individual has served his or her time, the scarlet letter precluding the
29 participation in our democracy should be removed from his or her head; and

30 WHEREAS, those involved in the restoration of one's voting rights have experienced ex-felons
31 who want to become involved in their communities, want to be able to cast their vote in an election and
want to have a say in the government to make a difference in a very positive manner; and

1 WHEREAS, many believe that the only reason to let felons vote is to stigmatize them or to
2 continue punishing them, and if allowed to vote, they would be less likely to return to prison and more
3 likely to become reintegrated into their communities; and

4 WHEREAS, voting is a fundamental right and a cornerstone of our democracy, yet millions of
5 Americans have had their right to vote revoked for periods ranging from the time spent incarcerated to a
6 lifetime; and

7 WHEREAS, the Village Commission of the Village of Biscayne Park believe that the
8 automatic restoration of voting rights will give a person a meaningful way to re-enter society, allow
9 them to participate in our democracy, and incentivize good behavior.

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11 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE VILLAGE COMMISSION OF THE
12 VILLAGE OF BISCAZYNE PARK, FLORIDA:

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14 **Section 1:** The Village Commission of the Village of Biscayne Park, Florida, hereby strongly
15 urges the Florida State Legislature to repeal all legislation that denies the restoration of voting.

16 **Section 2:** The Village Clerk is hereby directed to transmit a certified copy of this Resolution
17 to Governor Rick Scott, all State Representatives and State Senators, Michael Sittig, Executive Director
18 of the Florida League of Cities, Inc.; Richard Kuper, Esquire, Executive Director of the Miami Dade
19 County League of Cities, Inc.; and to the presiding Officers and Council members of the municipalities
20 in Miami-Dade County.

21 **Section 3:** The Village Commission of the Village of Biscayne Park, Florida, hereby direct the
22 Village's state lobbyist to advocate for legislation set forth in section 1.

23 **Section 4:** That this resolution shall be effective immediately upon adoption by majority vote
24 of the Village Commission of the Village of Biscayne Park, Florida.

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26 PASSED AND ADOPTED this 6th day of November, 2013.

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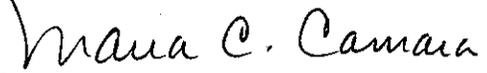


Noah Jacobs, Mayor

The foregoing resolution upon being put to a vote, the vote was as follows:

Mayor Jacobs: Yes
Vice Mayor Anderson: Yes
Commissioner Cooper: Yes
Commissioner Ross: Yes
Commissioner Watts: Yes

Attest:



Maria C. Camara, Village Clerk

Approved as to form:



Village Attorney