



# Board of Commissioners of Cook County

118 North Clark Street  
Chicago, IL

## Legislation Text

---

**File #:** 24-3617, **Version:** 1

---

### **PROPOSED RESOLUTION**

#### **A RESOLUTION CALLING ON THE U.S. GOVERNMENT TO END THE BLOCKADE OF CUBA AND FOR THE REMOVAL FROM THE STATE SPONSOR OF TERRORISM LIST**

**WHEREAS**, Since 1962, the United States government has imposed a strict economic, commercial, and financial embargo on the Republic of Cuba; and

**WHEREAS**, On December 17, 2014, former U.S. President Barack Obama and former Cuban President Raul Castro executed an agreement to reestablish diplomatic relations and cooperation between the two countries on certain matters of mutual interest. Despite executive decisions by President Obama easing some restrictive regulations, the central portions of the embargo affecting trade and travel continue to be enforced; and

**WHEREAS**, In 2021, former President Donald Trump's administration reinstated Cuba to the U.S. list of state sponsors of terrorism, reversing former President Barack Obama's 2015 removal from it without providing any reasonable justification for doing so; and

**WHEREAS**, Complete restoration of trade and travel between the two countries would be of great benefit to both, particularly in the areas of food production, economic opportunities, education, healthcare, tourism, the arts, music, and sports - along with medical and biotechnological research; and

**WHEREAS**, Cook County would greatly benefit from the restoration of trade with the Republic of Cuba by permitting the export of industrial and agricultural products to this neighboring nation of 11 million people and the importation of Cuban products applicable to the county, such as life-saving medicines Heberprot-p and CIMAvax; and an extreme interest in providing healthcare-related expertise including products and services, and cooperating with Cuban institutions in the development of pharmaceuticals; and

**WHEREAS**, Businesses and institutions in Cook County and across Illinois have expressed the desire to trade with Cuban counterparts on matters related to biomedical research, technology, and procedures; and

**WHEREAS**, Under President Joe Biden's administration, some travel restrictions have been partially lifted, but many limitations remain. A complete restoration of travel and trade would greatly benefit both countries. These sanctions, and the threat of secondary sanctions to other nations, continue to inflict daily hardships on the people of Cuba - making it difficult for them to grow their economy, maintain high-quality healthcare, and improve their education system; and

**WHEREAS**, The embargo has created economic and emotional hardship for families in both Cuba and in the Cuban-American community in the United States and unfairly restricts the ability of Cuban Americans to send financial resources to their relatives in Cuba; and

**WHEREAS**, Cuba has been experiencing a historic migration crisis since the COVID-19 pandemic, with nearly 500,000 Cubans seeking refuge in the United States between 2021-2023 due to economic hardships associated with U.S. sanctions. This is the most significant mass emigration in Cuba's history, accounting for nearly 5% of the country's population; and

**WHEREAS**, Cook County residents, institutions, and businesses are also negatively affected by these added restrictions, which violate their right to travel and harm the economic, academic, religious, and cultural opportunities that enhanced trade with Cuba would initiate.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, That the Cook County President and the Board of Commissioners hereby find that the embargo and travel restrictions are prejudicial to the interests of the citizens of Cook County, the United States, and Cuba as a violation of the rights of United States citizens and residents to travel to Cuba for educational research and cultural exchange; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, That the President of the United States of America and Congress are urged to promulgate and pass legislation to end the harmful 62-year-old economic, financial, and commercial embargo, as well as the travel restrictions on U.S. citizens and residents to Cuba, and Cuban citizens to the United States and removal of Cuba from the unsubstantiated placement on the U.S. “state sponsor of terrorism list”; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, That suitable copies of this resolution be prepared and presented to the Cook County congressional delegation and the President of the United States of America.