

By: Rodriguez

H.R. No. 1237

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, Members of the Austin Sanctuary Network have
2 demonstrated tremendous dedication to the well-being of vulnerable
3 asylum seekers; and

4 WHEREAS, Founded in 2015, ASN is a coalition of faith
5 communities, immigrants, and others committed to sheltering and
6 assisting immigrants and asylum seekers who have fled dangerous and
7 deadly conditions in their countries of origin; the network upholds
8 the time-honored tradition of offering safe haven in places of
9 worship as it stands in solidarity with undocumented immigrants who
10 are being detained unjustly and denied asylum status; and

11 WHEREAS, ASN strives to create a community to provide
12 physical sanctuary for immigrants who have exhausted their legal
13 options and face deportation; congregations offering sanctuary
14 supply shelter, needed food, clothing, and legal, medical, and
15 educational assistance; and

16 WHEREAS, Since late 2016, as Immigration and Customs
17 Enforcement has become more aggressive in pursuing undocumented
18 immigrants, ASN has broadened its scope in order to protect human
19 rights; it has embraced asylum seekers Alirio Gamez, Hilda Ramirez,
20 and Ivan Ramirez as members of the community, supporting them as
21 they live in sanctuary at two local churches; and

22 WHEREAS, Mr. Gamez escaped violence and death threats in El
23 Salvador, and in September 2017, he received sanctuary at First
24 Unitarian Universalist Church of Austin; Ms. Ramirez and her young

1 son, Ivan, fled violence in Guatemala, and they have been residing
2 at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church for nearly three years; the
3 lives of all three are at risk if they are sent back to their
4 countries of origin; previously, they were determined to be a
5 low-level priority for deportation and were granted temporary
6 stays, and ICE is vested with the discretion to decline to pursue
7 enforcement or to further defer action, given that the interest
8 served is not substantial or is outweighed by other considerations;
9 and

10 WHEREAS, Alirio Gamez, Hilda Ramirez, and Ivan Ramirez are
11 seeking asylum in this country, as is their legal right, and the
12 Austin Sanctuary Network is working with faith and compassion to
13 help these brave members of the faith community realize their
14 dreams of living in safety and freedom and making positive
15 contributions to our society; now, therefore, be it

16 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 86th Texas
17 Legislature hereby recognize the Austin Sanctuary Network for its
18 efforts in behalf of asylum seekers Alirio Gamez, Hilda Ramirez,
19 and Ivan Ramirez and commend the members of the network for their
20 humanitarian work; and, be it further

21 RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be
22 prepared for ASN as an expression of high regard by the Texas House
23 of Representatives.