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RESOLUTION NO. 2024-120

A Resolution of the City of Gainesville, Florida, opposing Florida House Bill 601 which would eliminate the right of cities to establish police Civilian Oversight Agencies; providing directions to the City Clerk; and providing an immediate effective date.

WHEREAS, Florida House Bill 601, Complaints Against Law Enforcement and Correctional Officers, seeks to eliminate all police Civilian Oversight Agencies in Florida; and,

WHEREAS, the City of Gainesville Police Advisory Council has successfully and capably served the community for more than a decade as a Civilian Oversight Agency. This citizen board acts in an advisory capacity to the Police Department by providing direct feedback on policies, issues, disparities, trends, reports and concerns from the community about public safety issues, and needs and actions of law enforcement. Topics have included juvenile arrests, crime data and trends, staffing and recruitment challenges, gang activity, employee satisfaction, school resource officers, and more. To this end, the Gainesville Police Advisory Council is devoted to positively facilitating the flow of ideas relative to police services for the continued improvement of the quality of life of its citizens and business owners; and,

WHEREAS, Civilian Oversight Agencies can help enhance accountability among police departments while serving as a source of external oversight; and,

WHEREAS, there are currently 21 Civilian Oversight Agencies in cities across Florida; and,

WHEREAS, data suggests that cities with Civilian Oversight Agencies have seen a reduction in total Black arrests per 100,000 compared to cities that do not have Civilian Oversight Agencies; and,

25 **WHEREAS**, data indicates that cities which adopt a Civilian Oversight Agency
26 experience a roughly 15% reduction in the total Black arrest rates compared to cities not
27 adopting a Civilian Oversight Agency; and,

28 **WHEREAS**, the adoption of a Civilian Oversight Agency can be the first step in
29 improving communication between the police and the community; and,

30 **WHEREAS**, a Civilian Oversight Agency can work as an avenue to increase public
31 legitimacy of the police force by showing a willingness of officers to have an external body act
32 as an oversight agency; and,

33 **WHEREAS**, a Civilian Oversight Agency can be paired with other policy instruments to
34 decrease racial disparities in policing; and,

35 **WHEREAS**, a ban on Civilian Oversight Agencies could harm efforts to foster better
36 relations and trust among police and communities.

37 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE**
38 **CITY OF GAINESVILLE, FLORIDA:**

39 **Section 1.** The City Commission opposes House Bill 601 for the reasons stated above
40 and urges the members of the Florida Legislature to vote against these Bills.

41 **Section 2.** The City Clerk is directed to send a copy of this resolution to the Florida
42 League of Cities, the Clerk for the Senate and House of Representatives, and Alachua County
43 Legislative Delegation Members Senator Keith Perry, Representative Chuck Brannan III,
44 Representative Yvonne Hayes-Hinson and Representative Chuck Clemons Sr.

45 **Section 3.** This Resolution shall become effective immediately upon adoption.

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48 **PASSED AND ADOPTED** this 1st day of February 2024.

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Harvey L. Ward, Jr.
Mayor

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54 ATTEST:

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Kristen J. Bryant
City Clerk

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