



# Memorandum

**TO:** City Council

**FROM:** Mayor Gonzales, Vice Mayor Chavez, Councilmembers Reed, Cortese, and Pyle

**SUBJECT:** Resolution Recognizing Vietnamese Heritage and Freedom Flag

**DATE:** May 17, 2005

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Approved

Date:

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## **RECOMMENDATION**

Approve the attached City of San Jose resolution recognizing the Vietnamese Heritage and Freedom Flag as the official symbol of the Vietnamese-American community of San Jose.

## **BACKGROUND**

The Mayor and City Council have been asked by several Vietnamese-American community groups to adopt a resolution recognizing the Vietnamese Heritage and Freedom Flag (three red stripes on a field of gold) as the official symbol of the Vietnamese-American community. Two other municipalities in the Bay Area (City of Milpitas and County of Santa Clara) have adopted similar resolutions. Many other cities in the county and state are being asked to consider resolutions as well, and 94 cities and local governments throughout the United States have also adopted similar resolutions.

Santa Clara County is home to one of the largest Vietnamese communities outside of Vietnam. Our city should continue its leadership role of recognizing and supporting its many diverse communities by acknowledging and honoring the flag as a symbol of freedom and human rights. The proposed resolution will help accomplish several objectives in addition to showing our respect for the Vietnamese Heritage and Freedom Flag.

Many of our Vietnamese-American residents are refugees who have suffered from imprisonment and other actions by the government of Vietnam. Some fear they could be targeted for reprisals if they exercise their freedom of speech and advocate for freedom and human rights in Vietnam. Approving the proposed resolution will provide assurance to our Vietnamese-American residents that we will protect them and defend their rights to engage in political activity.

Some schools have celebrations with displays of international flags. The proposed resolution will help raise awareness in the schools that children of immigrants from the former Republic of Vietnam should be allowed to display the Vietnamese Heritage and Freedom Flag.