

County of Santa Clara
Supervisory District Three



24-4247

DATE: February 6, 2024 (Item No. 33)

TO: Board of Supervisors

FROM: Otto Lee, Supervisor

Cindy Chavez, Supervisor

SUBJECT: Reaffirmation for the Vietnamese Heritage and Freedom Flag

RECOMMENDED ACTION

Adopt Resolution to reaffirm prior recognition of the flag of the former Republic of Vietnam as the official flag of the Vietnamese American community in Santa Clara County and oppose the display of the flag of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam on County-owned flag poles. (Lee/Chavez)

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

Vietnamese Americans have become a well-established and important community in Northern California with over 140,000 living in Santa Clara County. The Vietnamese community helped build a vibrant county with contributions to medicine, science, education, business, sports, labor, government, the arts, and more.

The Vietnamese community outside of Vietnam embraces the Vietnamese Heritage and Freedom flag, also known as the flag of the former Republic of Vietnam, consisting of three red horizontal stripes upon a field of gold under which thousands of Vietnamese fought bravely to defend their country and keep it free. To the Vietnamese community in the United States, this flag represents the displacement of hundreds of thousands of refugees who were forced to flee the Vietnamese Communist regime, dictatorship, and tyranny to search for freedom. This flag is also a symbol of freedom, not only in the United States but around the world. Although the flag of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam may be the flag of a sovereign nation, it does not represent the Vietnamese community in Santa Clara County. The Vietnamese community who fled Vietnam do not recognize or condone the Vietnam Communist regime.

For these reasons, we request a Resolution to reaffirm the County's commitment to recognizing the former Republic of Vietnam flag to include additional language to strengthen it and to be aligned with other local jurisdictions. The City of San Jose adopted its first

resolution in 2005 and reaffirmed the resolution language in 2017. Congress has also introduced H.Res.560 to recognize the flag of the former Republic of Vietnam as the official symbol of the Vietnamese American community in the United States. In addition, 20 states, 15 counties, and 85 cities have also embraced the Former Republic of Vietnam flag.

BACKGROUND

On June 3, 2003, the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors approved a Resolution recognizing the Republic of Vietnam flag (Vietnamese Heritage and Freedom Flag) as the official flag to represent the Vietnamese community at a County facility. As a County, we have a history of standing together as a community to advance the cause of freedom and democracy. We also intend to express opposition to the display of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam flag on any County-owned flagpole located on County property.

ATTACHMENTS:

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