



COMMISSION ON HUMAN RELATIONS
CITY OF CHICAGO

Board of Commissioners

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, on March 29, 2011, a Texas-based group called Life Always unveiled three anti-abortion billboards in the Englewood neighborhood, an African American community on the South Side of Chicago. These billboards feature an image of President Barack Obama, with the message, "Every 21 minutes our next possible leader is aborted;"

WHEREAS, Life Always has plans to place as many as 30 additional billboards transmitting anti-abortion messages throughout Chicago's African American communities;

WHEREAS, these billboards target Black women in the African American communities conveying a racially-based and sexist message that African American women are having unintended pregnancies resulting in abortions that purportedly kill "potential future Black leaders;"

WHEREAS, in response to these racially-based anti-abortion billboards, the Chicago Commission on Human Relations' Advisory Council on Women, which works to promote gender equality and eliminate practices that cause harassment or discrimination, rejects the billboard's offensive implication that African American women are complicit with genocide;

WHEREAS, the Advisory Council on Women, while upholding the constitutional right to free speech unless defamatory in nature, also acknowledges the constitutional right to privacy under the Ninth Amendment to the United States Constitution which protects the reproductive rights of all women, including African American women;

WHEREAS, contrary to Life Always' claim that the high abortion rate among African American women is merely the result of aggressive marketing from abortion providers, African American women have less access to comprehensive and sexual health education, including family planning, prevention and transmission of HIV/AIDs and other sexually transmitted infections;

WHEREAS, some of the programs advocated by the Advisory Council on Women have involved working with hospitals, public health departments and community agencies to sponsor forums and health screenings for gender specific health issues;

WHEREAS, the insidious message of the Life Always billboard campaign is misleading to the citizens of Chicago and especially to the African American women and families who pass these racially discriminating anti-abortion billboards;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Chicago Commission on Human Relations calls for the immediate removal of the Life Always racist anti-abortion billboards in the Englewood community and the prevention of Life Always' plan to erect similar billboards elsewhere in African American communities in Chicago;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Chicago Commission on Human Relations calls for Life Always and associated groups to immediately stop their vilification of African American women.

ADOPTED this 18th day of May 2011.

Chicago Commission on Human Relations Board of Commissioners

This resolution represents the formally expressed opinion of the Chicago Commission on Human Relations but does not necessarily represent the official position of the City of Chicago.