

1 RESOLUTION NO. 2024-244

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3 SPONSOR Executive Shapiro, Council as a Whole

4

5 DATE August 19, 2024 COMMITTEE Human Services

6

7 **A Resolution declaring September 13-22, 2024, as Welcoming Week in Summit County,**
8 **recognizing refugees, immigrants, new citizens, and the contributions they make to our**
9 **community, as well as the challenges and roadblocks they face, and declaring an emergency.**

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11 WHEREAS, the week of September 13-22, 2024, is nationally celebrated as Welcoming
12 Week; and

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14 WHEREAS, during Welcoming Week, organizations and communities bring refugees,
15 immigrants, new citizens, and all residents together to affirm the importance of welcoming and
16 inclusive spaces in building a better community; and

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18 WHEREAS, Welcoming Week provides an opportunity for neighbors to share stories
19 about their lives, experiences, and identities that help us empathize and work toward shared goals;
20 and

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22 WHEREAS, in 2015, this Council voted unanimously to declare Summit County a
23 Welcoming County and participate in the global celebrations of Welcoming Week each year; and

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25 WHEREAS, in 2024, Summit County has renewed its membership as part of Welcoming
26 America, a network and movement dedicated to connecting and uplifting inclusive communities,
27 with a special emphasis on newcomers of all backgrounds, identities, and perspectives; and

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29 WHEREAS, each day offers a theme, ranging from civic engagement to education to
30 safety, that provides a platform for communities to discuss inclusion and support for new residents;
31 and

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33 WHEREAS, the International Institute of Akron has resettled approximately 500 refugees
34 from countries such as the Democratic Republic of Congo, Myanmar (Burma), Iraq, and
35 Afghanistan in the Federal Fiscal Year 2024; and

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37 WHEREAS, according to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
38 (“UNHCR”), last year saw a staggering increase in the number of refugees across the world,
39 moving from 29.6 million in 2019 to 43.6 million in 2023; and

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41 WHEREAS, the UNHCR also reports a dramatic increase in the total number of people
42 forcibly displaced from their homes as a result of persecution, conflict, violence, human rights
43 violations, or events seriously disturbing public order, increasing 47.67% from 79.4 million people
44 in 2019 to 117.3 million people by the end of 2023; and

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46 WHEREAS, according to the International Organization for Migration (“IOM”), there
47 were an estimated 281 million migrants across the world in 2020 who were displaced from their
48 communities; and

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4 WHEREAS, ensuring all residents, new citizens, immigrants, and refugees of all
5 backgrounds are welcomed is crucial for a growing and thriving community where residents are
6 free to start a business, earn an education, create art, begin a family, purchase a home, make
7 friendships, and plant roots; and

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9 WHEREAS, Summit County aims to be this welcoming community; and

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11 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the County of Summit, State
12 of Ohio, that:

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14 SECTION 1

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16 The week of September 13-22, 2024, is hereby declared Welcoming Week in Summit
17 County, and the residents of Summit County are encouraged to join in this acknowledgment.

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19 SECTION 2

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21 This Resolution is therefore declared an emergency in the interest of refugees, immigrants,
22 new citizens, and all residents of the County of Summit and for the purpose of immediately
23 declaring the week of September 13-22, 2024, as Welcoming Week in Summit County.

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25 SECTION 3

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27 Provided this Resolution receives the affirmative vote of eight (8) members, it shall take
28 effect immediately upon its adoption and approval by the Executive; otherwise, it shall take effect
29 and be in force at the earliest time provided by law.

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31 SECTION 4

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33 It is found and determined that all formal actions of this Council concerning and relating
34 to the adoption of this Resolution were adopted in an open meeting of this Council, and that all
35 deliberations of this Council and of any of its committees that resulted in such formal action, were
36 in meetings open to the public, in compliance with all legal requirements, including Section 121.22
37 of the Ohio Revised Code.

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39 INTRODUCED August 19, 2024

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41 **ADOPTED** DocuSigned by: September 9, 2024

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43 *Monique Willis*
44 _____
CLERK OF COUNCIL
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DocuSigned by:
Rita J. Darrow

PRESIDENT OF COUNCIL
132FA5B69D28443...

46 **APPROVED** DocuSigned by: September 9, 2024

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48 *Jesse Shapiro*
49 _____
EXECUTIVE
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Voice Vote – YES: 10 – 0: Darrow, Dickinson,
Donofrio, Ford, Kacyon, McKenney, Rodgers,
Schmidt, Walters, Wiedie Higham
Absent: Wilhite

51 ENACTED EFFECTIVE September 10, 2024