

Communication from Public

Name: The Black Alliance for Just Immigration

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Council File No: 21-0702

Comments for Public Posting: Dear Councilmembers, The Black Alliance for Just Immigration (BAJI) supports the Antiracist Los Angeles motion (Agenda Item #38) written by Councilmembers Ridley-Thomas, Price, and Harris-Dawson. This is an opportunity to continue building on the steps that have been taken by the City thus far to ensure that racial justice and racial equity are centered as the City endeavors to protect Black communities from the deep-seated injustices of this country's and city's historically racist systems. Racial justice means the City must fully recognize Black migrants as members of the City's Black and migrant communities. One out of every five Black people in Los Angeles County is a Black migrant, and many of us are Black Angelenos. Addressing racial equity and racial justice means addressing the policies that disproportionately harm Black people, including Black migrants, and especially where those policies intersect with the criminalization, separation, and exclusion of Black migrant communities. Passing this motion takes us one step more toward these goals. For Black migrants, racial equity means that the City no longer criminalizes and separates us from our families and communities, and ends the police-to-deportation pipeline. Even though Black immigrants are less than 7% of the foreign-born population in LA County, about 20% of all migrants facing deportation on criminal grounds are Black migrants. Black migrants are criminalized for our Blackness in the same ways that multi-generational African Americans are criminalized. We expect that this city council will pass this motion as a commitment to end the criminalization of Black people, regardless of national origin. Racial equity also means an end to the exclusion of Black migrants from access to City services, benefits, and programs, including legal representation in immigration matters. Ensuring that programs like the Los Angeles Justice Fund (LAJF) be merit-blind and represent immigrants regardless of their contact with the criminal system could be one example of proving that the City is committed to racial equity. We expect that the City will provide our communities with services, benefits, and programs that reflect cultural competence and a deep understanding that racial justice is an immigration issue. We urge the City Council to pass this motion and then prepare to engage in the substantive shifts in policy and accountability required to achieve the racial equity and

racial justice that we seek. Thank you. The Black Alliance for Just Immigration (BAJI)