WHEREAS, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, to which the United States is a party, states that "the right to freedom of opinion and expression" (Art. 19), and "the right to work, … to just and favourable conditions of work and to protection against unemployment" (Art. 23) are inalienable rights to which "Everyone is entitled … without distinction of any kind, such as …political or other opinion" (Art. 2); and,

WHEREAS, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, to which the United States is a party, states that "Everyone shall have the right to hold opinions without interference" and "shall have the right to freedom of expression" (Art. 19), which rights shall be recognized "without distinction of any kind, such as … political or other opinion" (Art. 6); and

WHEREAS, the importance of freedom of expression as a fundamental foundation of a free society is enshrined in the US Constitution in the First Amendment and in Supreme Court interpretations of that Amendment; and;

WHEREAS, as introduced, Michigan House Bill 4532 (2007) would have banned discrimination in employment "because the employee engages in, or is regarded as engaging in, a lawful activity that is both off the employer's premises and during nonwork hours"; and,

WHEREAS, Michigan has already adopted legislation in the Police and Fire Civil Service Act of 1935 that partially bans discrimination in employment on the basis of "political or religious opinions or affiliations" (MCL 38.512(1)); and,

WHEREAS, there are also several examples of local governments and public bodies protecting the political rights of people, including the following:

- The City of Seattle, Washington broadly bans discrimination on the basis of "political ideology," which includes "membership in a political party or group and includes conduct, reasonably related to political ideology, which does not interfere with job performance" (Seattle Municipal Code, Title 14 - Human Rights)
- Article II of Michigan State University's "Anti-Discrimination Policy" broadly prohibits discrimination on the basis of "political persuasion"
- The City of Lansing, Michigan bans discrimination in housing on the basis of "political orientation" (Lansing City Code, Chapter 296 - Fair Housing)
- In 2005, the Washtenaw County Board of Commissioners adopted Resolution 05-0081 prohibiting discrimination in employment, including by County contractors, on account of "political belief"
- The "Non-Discrimination Policy of the Ann Arbor Public Schools" broadly bans discrimination on the basis of "political belief;"
WHEREAS, Chapter 112 of the Ann Arbor City Code, entitled "Non-Discrimination," states, in part, "It is the intent of the city that no person be denied to equal protection of the laws; nor shall any person be denied the enjoyment of his or her civil or political rights;" and,

WHEREAS, the mandate of the Ann Arbor Human Rights Commission includes making "public reports and recommendations to the City Council and City Administrator on ways to improve city … ordinances designed to eliminate discrimination" (Ann Arbor City Code, Chapter 1:222; emphasis added).

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that the Ann Arbor Human Rights Commission urges the City Council to amend Chapter 112 of the Ann Arbor City Code to clearly, broadly, and strongly protect people’s right to freedom of opinion and expression; and,

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that said protection should include, but not be limited to, the rights of employees to freely engage in lawful political expression and other lawful conduct which does not interfere with job performance, including but not limited to, conduct when they are off their employer's premises during non-work hours.