

RESOLUTION 2004-08

A RESOLUTION REQUESTING INCLUSION IN THE EMERGENCY PLANNING AND VULNERABILITY ASSESSMENTS FOR CONTAINER PORTS, SPECIFICALLY THOSE OPERATED BY THE PORT OF HOUSTON AUTHORITY.

WHEREAS, on September 11, 2001 this nation suffered horrible consequences from forces hostile to the United States, who brutally and without warning targeted the United States Pentagon in Washington, D.C., the World Trade Center in New York, and hijacked commercial aircraft, one destined to destroy the United States Capitol or White House; and

WHEREAS, the State, Federal and Local governments effectively and cooperatively joined forces to respond to that tragic day, demonstrating that all levels of government and especially cities can work with State and Federal Authorities to respond to an act of terrorism; and

WHEREAS, the primary responsibility of providing public safety to the citizens of Shoreacres rests with its City government and its elected and appointed officials before State, Federal and Port Authorities; and

WHEREAS, United States seaports and containerized/intermodal shipping have been recognized as a vulnerability threat to the nation's security following the events of September 11, 2001; and

WHEREAS, the Office of Homeland Security has granted federal dollars to the Port of Houston Authority to increase port security without asking or soliciting participation or planning input from the nearby local governments closest and most vulnerable to potential acts of terrorism at the proposed Bayport Container Terminal; and

WHEREAS, fewer than two (2) percent of all containers shipped into the United States are actually opened and physically inspected to confirm the reliability of technology screening and regulatory profiling in preventing contraband, drugs, and potential weapons of mass destruction; and

WHEREAS, before the events of September 11, 2001, the federal government was considering legislation to increase security at all the nation's ports, at least in part to stem the flow of illegal drugs and contraband; and

WHEREAS, such legislation would have required background checks from those working at United States seaports; and

WHEREAS, the labor organizations whose membership would be affected by potential background checks objected to such requirements as part of federal legislation; and

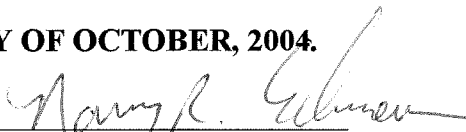
WHEREAS, failure to require background checks of port personnel is contrary to practices at the nation's airports, which require background checks of all personnel working in sensitive areas; and

WHEREAS, the United States Army Corps of Engineers has granted a permit (currently on appeal) to build the Bayport Container Terminal on the one location with the highest concentration of nearby residential property and the public schools compared to several other sites considered; casually casting off security as irrelevant because it would be the same at all those sites;


NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SHOREACRES, TEXAS:

1. The Mayor and City Council of the City of Shoreacres take seriously their charge to protect and respond to the public safety of citizens;
2. The Mayor and City Council of the City of Shoreacres requests and expects Texas Legislators to include local officials in planning seaport security with adequate notice to local officials;
3. The City of Shoreacres supports the City of Seabrook in its efforts to engage an objective and professional security analyst to determine the risk factors of the proposed Bayport Container Terminal, (including terrorist incident probabilities and consequences) regarding seaport security and to supply a recommended policy and response action plans;
4. The Mayor and City Council of the City of Shoreacres requests that the City Secretary send this Resolution to President George W. Bush, the City's United States Congressional Representatives and Senators, the Texas Governor and Legislative Representatives, Harris County Judges and Commissioners, area Mayors and City Councils, the Texas Municipal League, the 9/11 Commission, and the Office of Homeland Security.

PASSED AND APPROVED THIS THE 25TH DAY OF OCTOBER, 2004.


Nancy R. Edmonson, Mayor

ATTEST:


Shari Tait, City Secretary