

RESOLUTION NO. _____

A RESOLUTION TO EXPRESS THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL'S SUPPORT FOR THE RELEASE OF PRE-TRIAL NON-VIOLENT DETAINEES FROM THE WASHINGTON COUNTY DETENTION CENTER TO REDUCE THE RISK OR IMPACT OF A COVID-19 OUTBREAK IN THE JAIL AND TO PROTECT THE PUBLIC HEALTH DURING A STATE OF EMERGENCY.

WHEREAS the United States of America, the State of Arkansas and the City of Fayetteville have all declared states of emergency in their respective jurisdictions resulting from the worldwide pandemic of COVID-19; and

WHEREAS leaders at all levels of government have urged, and sometimes ordered, people not to gather in large numbers but rather practice "social distancing" in order to lower the risk to the public and "flatten the curve" of COVID-19 infection; and

WHEREAS public health officials have widely recognized that concentrated human environments such as jails are particularly susceptible to outbreaks of communicable diseases in general and COVID-19 infection in particular; and

WHEREAS the consequences of COVID-19 transmission in the Washington County Detention Center (the "jail"), would be potentially catastrophic to jail detainees, sentenced prisoners, staff and their families, and in turn, to the citizens of the City of Fayetteville with whom they interact; and

WHEREAS significant reduction in the population of the jail, through the release of pre-trial detainees who are not charged with violent offenses and whose previous histories do not reflect a history or pattern of violent behavior, would reduce the likelihood or severity of an outbreak in the jail, mitigate the public health risk to all our citizens, and even potentially save lives;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF FAYETTEVILLE, ARKANSAS:

Section 1: That the Mayor and the City Council of the City of Fayetteville, Arkansas urgently requests that all branches of City and Washington County government take necessary and responsible measures to reduce the population of the Washington County Detention Center via the pretrial release of detainees charged with, but not convicted of nonviolent offenses.

Section 2: That the Mayor and City Council of the City of Fayetteville, Arkansas hereby urge that no one be detained in the jail solely because of financial inability to post bail or bond, that bonds be set only in reasonable proportion to the seriousness of the crime charged and the defendant's previous history, and that all law enforcement and criminal justice agencies take appropriate measures to assure to the extent possible that limited jail space be reserved, primarily, for defendants who are demonstrably dangerous.

PASSED and **APPROVED** this 16th day of March, 2020.

APPROVED:

ATTEST:

By: _____
LIONELD JORDAN, Mayor

By: _____
KARA PAXTON, City Clerk-Treasurer