



Legislation Text

File #: 20564, **Version:** 1

Title

Declaring, on an annual basis, the week of December 10-12 to be Madison Civil Rights and Human Rights Week.

Fiscal Note

No expenditure required.

Body

WHEREAS, the original Madison Equal Opportunities Ordinance was enacted by the City of Madison on December 12, 1963; and

WHEREAS, the Equal Opportunities Ordinance became law after a tie vote on the Madison Common Council was overcome by Mayor Henry Reynolds casting the deciding vote; and

WHEREAS, numerous Madison residents worked tirelessly for many, many years prior to this historic vote to publicly address issues of housing discrimination, as well as discrimination in employment and public accommodations, in Madison; and

WHEREAS, individuals and groups focused great efforts to create strong legal protections in the City of Madison to ensure the reality of civil rights for all; and

WHEREAS, the Madison Equal Opportunities Ordinance has become one of the most comprehensive and powerful municipal civil rights ordinances in the United States, with the power to “make the complainant whole again” and

WHEREAS, the Equal Opportunities Ordinance states in its Declaration of Policy [Section 39.03 (1) Madison General Ordinances] that: “Discrimination against any of Madison’s residents or visitors endangers the rights and privileges of all.... it is hereby declared to be the public policy of the City of Madison to foster and enforce to the fullest extent the protection by law of the rights of all of its inhabitants to equal opportunity to gainful employment, housing, and the use of City facilities and public accommodations without regard to sex, race, religion, color, national origin or ancestry, citizenship status, age, handicap/disability, marital status, source of income, arrest record, conviction record, less than honorable discharge, physical appearance, sexual orientation, gender identity, genetic identity, political beliefs, familial status, student status, domestic partnership status, or status as a victim of domestic abuse, sexual assault or stalking,” and

WHEREAS, the Equal Opportunities Commission, is today composed of 13 city resident members with the powers to study the denial of equal opportunity, recommend solutions, educate the people of Madison, receive complaints, test and investigate violations, and report to the Common Council annually; and

WHEREAS, on December 10, 1948 the United Nations adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR); and

WHEREAS, the UDHR (Article 1) states: “All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of dignity” and

WHEREAS, the UDHR’s articles detail the internationally agreed-upon basis of human rights for all people worldwide; and

WHEREAS, the United Nations declares December 10 of each year to be “International Human Rights Day”;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City of Madison declare and dedicate, on an annual basis, the week of December 12 to be Madison Civil Rights and Human Rights Week; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that efforts be made to educate the people of our city in the words, spirit and rights of these two legal documents, as well as the history behind the creation of the Equal Opportunities Ordinance, in order to further strengthen civil rights in Madison; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that official efforts continue to work towards making the rights detailed in these documents a daily reality for each and every person in the City of Madison.