



Legislation Text

File #: 81021, **Version:** 1

Fiscal Note

No City appropriation required.

Title

Naming Steven Espada Dawson as Madison's Poet Laureate

Body

WHEREAS, poetry tells the history of humanity and locates community at a particular point in time; and,

WHEREAS, poetry is a way of one human being reaching out to another across ages, across times, across cultures; and,

WHEREAS, poetry is a visual art form as much as it is music; and,

WHEREAS, knowledge of poetic traditions allows us to know more about our own culture and lives, and serves as a passport to other cultures and worlds; and,

WHEREAS, on November 9, 2023 the Madison Arts Commission met to vet Poet Laureate applicants and after careful consideration, with the current Poet Laureate's input, the Madison Arts Commission recommend Steven to serve as the next Madison Poet Laureate and Katrin Talbot as first runner up; and

WHEREAS, Steven is a first generation Mexican American, born to a single mother, poetry became a creative outlet for him and driving force for Dawson to become the first in his immediate family to graduate high school; and,

WHEREAS, after graduating from Purdue with an MFA in Creative Writing, he was awarded a Ruth Lily Fellowship from the Poetry Foundation allowing him to teach, judge, and edit poetry for multiple communities; and,

WHEREAS, from 2020 to 2022 Steven worked with the Austin Public Library Foundation supporting creative programming for undeserved youth including mentoring Austin's Youth Poet Laureate program, and serving as a Guest Lecturer for the Mayor's Book Club; and,

WHEREAS, in 2022 Steven moved to Madison, WI to receive a Jay C. and Ruth Hall Poetry Fellowship from the Wisconsin Institute for Creative Writing; and,

WHEREAS, Steven is committed to preserving the legacy of past Madison Poets Laureate by continuing to support the programs they created; and,

WHEREAS, the Madison Arts Commission enthusiastically supports the nomination of Steven as the next Poet Laureate of Madison;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Mayor and Common Council of the City of Madison,

Wisconsin does hereby name Steven Espada Dawson Madison Poet Laureate effective January 15, 2024.