File #: 86829, **Version:** 1

Fiscal Note
No City appropriation required.
Title
Celebrating February 2025 as Black History Month in the City of Madison
Body
WHEREAS, to commemorate and celebrate the contributions to our nation made by people of African descent, American historian Carter G. Woodson established Black History Week nearly a century ago; and,

WHEREAS, the event was first celebrated during the second week of February 1926 and subsequently expanded to a month in 1976 during the nation's bicentennial; and,

WHEREAS, Black History Month is an opportunity to reflect on the complex history of the United States, while remaining hopeful and confident about the path ahead; and,

WHEREAS, African Americans continue to serve our city, state, and the United States at the highest levels of business, government, non-governmental agencies, and the military; and,

WHEREAS, the theme of Black History Month for 2025 is "African Americans and Labor", which "focuses on the various and profound ways that work and working of all kinds […] intersect with the collective experiences of Black people"; and,

WHEREAS, 2025 is the 100th anniversary of A. Phillip Randolph founding the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters and Maids, which became the first labor organization led by African Americans to receive charter in the American Federation of Labor; and,

WHEREAS, Hilton Hanna was a longtime Madison resident who became a key figure in the local civil rights and labor movements, as he was a member and eventual international Vice President of the Amalgamated Meat Cutters and Butcher Workmen of North America, assisted in re-establishing the Madison chapter of the NAACP, founded the Madison Urban League, and authored multiple labor-related books; and,

WHEREAS, this year's theme of African Americans and Labor considers both compensated work in the traditional sense, as well as including "the community building of social justice activists, voluntary workers serving others, and institution building in churches, community groups, and social clubs and organizations" in this reflection; and,

WHEREAS, "the work Black people do and have done have been instrumental in shaping the lives, cultures, and histories of Black people and the societies in which they live"; and,

WHEREAS, "understanding Black labor and its impact in all these multivariate settings is integral to understanding Black people and their histories, lives, and cultures"; and,

WHEREAS, Black labor throughout American history has been exploited time and time again, whether it be via enslavement, employment discrimination, wage discrepancies, and via many other avenues; and,

WHEREAS, in the face of this repeated exploitation, Black Americans have fought for better working

conditions, fair wages, and anti-discrimination policies, including organizational frameworks such as diversity, equity, and inclusion; and,

WHEREAS, Black labor continues to be under fire today, as seen by recent efforts to dismantle diversity, equity, and inclusion; and,

WHEREAS, it is imperative that, in order to truly be an inclusive and welcoming place, all Madisonians learn about the work of Black laborers past and present throughout the city and beyond, and commit to value, support, and encourage ways to improve the conditions for Black laborers within the City of Madison and throughout the nation;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Mayor and Madison Common Council recognize and celebrate February 2025 as Black History Month in Madison and around the United States.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that City of Madison acknowledges the significance of Black History Month as an important opportunity to commemorate the tremendous contributions of African Americans to the history of Madison and the United States and encourages public officials, businesses, educators, community, and all Madisonians to observe this month with relevant programs, ceremonies, and activities.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City encourages the celebration of this month by inviting all Madisonians to learn more about African Americans and Labor to better understand, appreciate, support, and center the varied and rich histories and experiences of Black Americans and how they have shaped our nation.

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that understanding, appreciating, and celebrating the diverse histories and experiences of Black Americans does not stop at the end of Black History Month and urges Madisonians to learn about and appreciate the rich heritage and contributions of African Americans throughout the year.