



Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago

100 East Erie Street
Chicago, IL 60611

Legislation Text

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RESOLUTION FOR BOARD MEETING OF JANUARY 20, 2022

RESOLUTION sponsored by the Board of Commissioners celebrating the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

WHEREAS, Monday, January 17th was recognized throughout the United States as Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. day; and

WHEREAS, born Michael King Jr. on January 15, 1929, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. lived to become one of the most widely recognized and well-respected civil rights advocate, prolific writer, and captivating leader that the world has ever known; and

WHEREAS, while growing up in the segregated south, Dr. King's parents emphasized the importance of education. Thus, after graduating from high school in 1944, Dr. King attended Morehouse College in Atlanta, Georgia, one of the few institutions of higher education that would admit black men. It was here, under the tutelage of Dr. Benjamin Mays that Dr. King decided to pursue a career in theology; and

WHEREAS, after graduating from Morehouse College in 1948, Dr. King attended Crozer Theological Seminary in Chester, Pennsylvania, where he was awarded with many honors based upon his stellar academic performance. He completed his course work in 1955 and was thereby presented with his doctorate degree; and

WHEREAS, on June 18, 1953, Dr. King married Coretta Scott in Marion, Alabama. Together, they had four children: Yolanda, Martin III, Dexter, and Bernice; and

WHEREAS, Dr. King's first celebrated act as a civil rights leader occurred on December 5, 1955 in Montgomery, Alabama where he worked with other leaders to mobilize the black community into orchestrating a 382 day boycott of the city's bus service due to the city's ordinance requiring segregated seating and that black passengers yield their seats to white passengers; and

WHEREAS, in 1957, utilizing the momentum that the bus boycott created, Dr. King, along with other notable black leaders, formed the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), an organization whose mission was to coordinate civil rights activities in the South; and

WHEREAS, Dr. King continued to be an influence within the civil rights movement, leading the Birmingham Campaign on April 3, 1963, which broadcast his non-violent tactics and drew the ire of many supporters, both within the United States and abroad, as it displayed the sheer ugliness and brutality of segregation; and

WHEREAS, on August 28, 1963, Dr. King was the keynote speaker for the March on Washington, a large-scale protest designed to attract worldwide attention to the continued plight of blacks in the United States. It was at the March on Washington where Dr. King gave his renowned "I Have a Dream" speech, in which he spoke of his dream that black people would one day be treated equally in all facets of life; and

WHEREAS, among his many accolades, Dr. King was awarded the Spingarn Medal by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People on June 28, 1957; awarded the Anisfield-Wolf Book Award for Non-fiction in 1959; named Person of the Year by Time magazine in 1963; awarded the Nobel Peace Prize

on December 10, 1964 (the youngest man to receive the award); and awarded the Jawaharlal Nehru Award for International Understanding in 1966. Posthumously, he was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom on July 11, 1977; the Congressional Gold Medal in 2004; and he was inducted into the Grammy Hall of Fame in 2012 for his "I Have a Dream" speech; and

WHEREAS, on April 4, 1968, Dr. King was assassinated while on the balcony of the Lorraine Motel in Memphis, Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, during his time as a civil rights leader, Dr. King endured countless acts of violence against himself and his family as pro-segregationists sought to silence him and put an end to the civil rights movement; and

WHEREAS, while the events recounted herein are those for which Dr. King is most recognized, in no way does this fully represent Dr. King's contribution to the civil rights movement. The power of his message of civil rights continues to influence equal rights leaders today, as Dr. King is credited with inspiring many movements for varying groups of minority classes; and

WHEREAS, on November 3, 1983, President Ronald Reagan signed a bill declaring Dr. King's birthday a national holiday. While his actual birthday falls on January 15th, the third Monday of the month of January was designated as the day for recognition of his life and legacy. The first national celebration of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day was in 1986; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that we, the Board of Commissioners of the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago, on behalf of ourselves and staff, do hereby celebrate the life, legacy, and innumerable contributions of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this Resolution be spread upon the permanent Record of Proceedings of the Board of Commissioners of the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago.

Dated: January 20, 2022