

R E S O L U T I O N

WHEREAS, February is Black History Month, an annual celebration of the many achievements by African Americans and their central role in the history of the United States; and

WHEREAS, the origin of Black History Month began in 1915, half a century after the Thirteenth Amendment abolished slavery in the United States, and grew out of “Negro History Week,” the creation of noted historian Carter G. Woodson and other prominent African Americans; and

WHEREAS, President Gerald Ford officially recognized Black History Month in 1976, calling upon the public to “seize the opportunity to honor the too-often neglected accomplishments of Black Americans in every area of endeavor throughout our history”; and

WHEREAS, African Americans suffered enslavement and subsequently faced the injustices of lynch mobs, segregation, and denial of the basic and fundamental rights of citizenship; and

WHEREAS, the vestiges of those injustices and inequalities remain evident in the society of the United States in 2024; and

WHEREAS, as a result of slavery, segregation, systemic racism, and mass incarceration, the Black family has often been fractured, but not broken, as the love within communities has extended the familial bonds to support the family through oppression and other hard times; and

WHEREAS, the United States could have never achieved the greatness that it has achieved were it not for all the contributions that African Americans have made; and

WHEREAS, with the Civil Rights Movement and a growing awareness of Black identity, Black History Month or National African American History Month evolved to an annual celebration of achievements by Black Americans and a time for recognizing the central role of African Americans in U.S. history; and

WHEREAS, Black History Month provides Chicagoans with an opportunity to reflect on our shared history as Americans; and honor the contributions and sacrifices of Black Americans who have helped shape our Nation; and

WHEREAS, our very own neighbors, friends, and constituents, contribute to deepening the richness and the landscape of Black history every day in our communities; and

WHEREAS, we recognize that we must continually recommit ourselves to the task of education, to see history not only through our own eyes, but through the eyes of those who experienced the world differently than we experience it and appreciate the struggles for the betterment of self, family, and community that so many have suffered for, strived for, worked for, and sacrificed for; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, That we, the Mayor and the Members of the City Council, assembled this twenty-first day of February 2024, do hereby celebrate Black History Month, and encourage all Chicagoans to join in the celebration.