

A CEREMONIAL RESOLUTION

25-22

IN THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

March 7, 2023

To recognize Transit Equity Day and to emphasize our commitment to equitable transportation systems across the District and Washington Metropolitan Region on the occasion of the day of action on February 4, 2023.

WHEREAS, Transit Equity Day is observed annually on February 4 to commemorate the life and legacy of Rosa Parks, recognizing her as a pivotal figure in the Civil Rights Movement when she refused to give up her seat on a segregated Montgomery, Alabama public bus and was arrested in 1955;

WHEREAS, Rosa Parks was an iconic figure in the movements for social justice and racial equality and played a significant role in the inception of the Civil Rights movement that ended legal segregation in the United States;

WHEREAS, Unequal access to public transit based on race, income, and disability has persisted since the Civil Rights era and has become worse in many areas of the country, with cuts in public funding for transit and consequent fare increases in many transit systems across the country, including the DC Metro region;

WHEREAS, Public transit is a fundamental right for all District residents and is often the only form of mobility for many in our communities, and the fight for transit equity continues in many communities across the District and around the country for high-quality, accessible and reliable transportation service;

WHEREAS, Public transit is essential urban infrastructure – just like roads, bridges, tunnels, and utilities – that is crucial to the economic, social, and environmental well-being of the District and the metropolitan region;

WHEREAS, Public transportation is a right that all District residents and others should have access to, and failing to make substantial investments in free or affordable transportation is to deny our residents a basic essential needed to be contributing members of our city and communities;

**ENROLLED ORIGINAL**

WHEREAS, Often, communities that rely on public transit the most often face the most difficulty accessing it, namely people of color and lower-income communities, who are literally stranded in their communities;

WHEREAS, The District must prioritize more investment in paratransit as a necessary component of any public transit system to ensure accessibility for people with disabilities and others who require it. Any expansion of public transit necessitates the further strengthening of paratransit so that it is as reliable and efficient as other parts of the transit system;

WHEREAS, The expansion of public transportation is a significant step towards meeting our climate mitigation goals and will be essential in reducing harmful transit-related emissions and ensuring that all District residents can safely and reliably get around the city and region;

WHEREAS, Our nation and the world are faced with the growing crisis of climate change, with record-breaking temperatures, with consequences including sea level rise, prolonged drought, more frequent wildfires, more severe storms and flooding, and spread of diseases;

WHEREAS, The overwhelming scientific consensus attributes the warming trend to human emissions of greenhouse gases from the combustion of fossil fuels such as oil, gas, and coal, and it is essential for the survival of humanity to drastically cut our emissions of greenhouse gases and convert our economy to renewable non-emitting energy sources;

WHEREAS, Emissions from the public transportation system are a major part of greenhouse gas emissions, and transitioning our transportation system from excessive automobile dependence to public transit, especially electrified public transit with electricity from renewable sources, is key to transitioning our economy from fossil fuels to renewable energy and cutting our greenhouse gas emissions;

WHEREAS, The required expansion of public transit to address the climate crisis also provides an unprecedented opportunity to create a large number of good, high-skill, family-supporting transit operation jobs, as well as construction jobs for building new transit facilities;

WHEREAS, The growth of public transit will also reduce automotive pollutants that have the worst impacts on the communities closest to highways and other major roads, which tend to be disproportionately communities of color and economically disadvantaged communities;

WHEREAS, The required expansion of public transit to address the climate crisis also provides an unprecedented opportunity to create a large number of good, high-skill, family-supporting transit jobs, as well as construction jobs for building new transit facilities and rail;

**ENROLLED ORIGINAL**

WHEREAS, Increased community access to public transit, reduction in racial, economic, and other disparities in access to transit and clean air and the burden of climate change impacts, and increased opportunities for employment in good jobs form a key part of a “just transition” from a carbon-intensive, fossil-fuel based, highly unequal extractive economy to a pollution-free, regenerative, renewable energy-based economy;

WHEREAS, Public transportation is a civil right, and the District will continue combating racial, economic, and other inequalities in access to adequate public transit and will lead efforts to provide affordable and accessible transit to all District residents.

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, that this resolution may be cited as the “District of Columbia Transit Equity Day Recognition Resolution of 2023”.

Sec. 2. The Council of the District of Columbia recognizes and hereby proclaims February 4, 2023, as Transit Equity Day.

Sec. 3. This resolution shall take effect immediately.