

A CEREMONIAL RESOLUTION

25-45

IN THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

April 4, 2023

To recognize April as Financial Literacy Month in the District of Columbia and highlight the importance of a financially literate and prosperous District community.

WHEREAS, Financial Literacy Month originated from Youth Financial Literacy Day by the National Endowment for Financial Education as an activity from a high school financial program;

WHEREAS, the efforts of Youth Financial Literacy Day was later passed on to Jump\$tart Coalition, and a day of education became a whole month known as the Financial Literacy for Youth Month in 2000;

WHEREAS, Congress demonstrated support for financial literacy month and passed a bill that recognized April as the National Financial Literacy Month in 2004;

WHEREAS, the purpose of Financial Literacy Month is to emphasize the importance of understanding financial principles and educate citizens on healthy economic habits;

WHEREAS, according to the Federal Reserve Bank of New York, Americans owe over \$980 billion in credit card debt;

WHEREAS, a January 2022 Bankrate survey showed that only 53% of United States adults had more emergency savings than they do credit card debt;

WHEREAS, United States student debt has reached \$1.75 trillion in 2023 and household debt increased to almost \$17 trillion, surpassing pre-pandemic debt, as reported by the Federal Reserve Bank of New York;

WHEREAS, a 2021 Financial Literacy and Preparedness Survey by The Harris Poll found that one third of the general population identified as “just getting by financially”, about 22% were saving less compared to a year ago, and over a third were concerned that the money they saved or will save will not last;

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WHEREAS, half of non-retired adults said the economic impact of the COVID-19 outbreak will make it harder for them to achieve their long-term financial goals, according to a 2021 Pew Research Center survey;

WHEREAS, the District also has one of the highest costs of living in the United States according to the Massachusetts Institute of Technology Living Wage Calculator;

WHEREAS, the District has the highest average student loan debt per borrower in the nation at \$54,945 per borrower, according to a 2023 report by the WordsRated research group;

WHEREAS, the 2019 Experian Consumer Credit Review found DC residents held one of the highest average credit card balances in the nation at over \$7,000;

WHEREAS, the District of Columbia was graded an F for financial literacy education by a 2017 national report card produced by the Champlain College's Center for Financial Literacy that analyzed all 50 states, and urged the District to integrate more comprehensive financial literacy education into its high school curriculum;

WHEREAS, researchers at the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis discovered that the median white family had \$184,000 in wealth compared to just \$38,000 and \$23,000 for the median Hispanic and Black families in 2019;

WHEREAS, according to a 2021 Racial Equity Racial Wealth Gap Study conducted by the Council Office on Racial Equity and MITRE, "since many Black families in the District have fewer assets and less collateral, they are subject to high interest rates and predatory loan practices when borrowing money";

WHEREAS, financial literacy is not just about improving credit but also about understanding how to effectively manage and pay off debts;

WHEREAS, financial competence can enhance the financial well-being and stability of a community;

WHEREAS, financial literacy decreases susceptibility to predatory practices and increases awareness of the long-term effects of saving;

WHEREAS, this Financial Literacy Month, the Council encourages District residents to build their financial management skills through conversations with non-profit organizations, banks and credit unions, schools, universities, and community programs and events; and

WHEREAS, the District offers free educational resources and services for District residents and small business owners at [www.disb.dc.gov/flm](http://www.disb.dc.gov/flm) and additional information at [www.financiallyfitdc.com](http://www.financiallyfitdc.com).

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RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, That this resolution may be cited as the “Financial Literacy Month Recognition Resolution of 2023”.

Sec. 2. The Council of the District of Columbia recognizes and highlights the significance of financial literacy education throughout the District of Columbia and declares April as “Financial Literacy Month” in the District of Columbia.

Sec. 3. This resolution shall take effect immediately.