



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

PROCLAMATION

International Underground Railroad Month – September 2022

WHEREAS; the Underground Railroad was a secret network of routes and safehouses utilized by enslaved African Americans to escape to Canada, among other destinations, where they would not be subject to so-called fugitive slave laws during the lead up to the Civil War; and

WHEREAS; between 1842 and 1861, more than 100 formerly enslaved individuals – including Caroline Quarlls, the first freedom seeker to travel through Wisconsin, and Joshua Glover, whose liberation from a Milwaukee jail cemented our reputation as a staunch abolitionist state – were aided on their journey to freedom by Wisconsin residents; and

WHEREAS; while accounts of Underground Railroad experiences are scarce, as both those who traveled it and those who aided them had to be discreet about their activities, documentation relating to several courageous journeys through Wisconsin have since been uncovered; and

WHEREAS; our state is committed to the preservation of our Underground Railroad history and, in fact, Wisconsin is home to the only authenticated underground tunnel used by freedom seekers in North America, located at the Milton House Museum in Milton; and

WHEREAS; we recognize the efforts of the many people – in Wisconsin and throughout the world – who have dedicated their lives to keeping the memory of the Underground Railroad alive through the National Park Service's National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom and UNESCO's Sites of Memory designations; and

WHEREAS; this occasion provides an opportunity for all Wisconsinites and all Americans to acknowledge the contributions of the Underground Railroad to the eradication of slavery in the United States, and to reflect on our collective past and how it informs the systems of oppression that persist in our culture and institutions; and

WHEREAS; this month, the state of Wisconsin commends the courage, determination, and resilience of the thousands of enslaved individuals who risked their lives on the Underground Railroad, and we reaffirm our commitment to creating a more just and equitable state and nation that would make these freedom seekers proud;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Anissa Welch, Mayor of the City of Milton, do hereby proclaim September 2022 as International Underground Railroad Month.



Signed this 6th day of September, 2022

Mayor Anissa M. Welch

Attest:

Jenny Salvo, City Clerk