

DENVER CITY COUNCIL



Proclamation No. 25-1621

Honoring the Victims and First Responders of United Flight 629

WHEREAS, on November 1, 1955, a Colorado man placed 25 sticks of dynamite in his mother's suitcase, which was later loaded into United Airlines Flight 629's cargo hold departing Denver's Stapleton Field enroute to Portland, Oregon; and

WHEREAS, the aircraft, a Douglas DC 6, exploded eight miles east of Longmont killing 39 passengers and 5 crew; and

WHEREAS, this despicable act of murder was an attempt by a victim's son to collect insurance benefits upon his mother's death; and

WHEREAS, the bombing of United Airlines Flight 629 stands among the deadliest acts of mass murder in the United States during the 20th century; and

WHEREAS, this tragedy inflicted immense trauma on victims' families and first responders, and left an indelible mark of sadness on the history of our state; and

WHEREAS, surprisingly there was no federal law at the time that prohibited the bombing of a civilian aircraft, since such an act of treachery had never before occurred, resulting in the Denver District Attorney's Office adjudicating the case locally and allowing cameras in the courtroom for the first time in American history and leading to significant security changes in the manner in which Americans travel; and

WHEREAS, November 1, 2025, marks the 70th anniversary of this horrific act of murder, and the Denver Police Museum has partnered with History Colorado, Wings Over the Rockies, The CELL, University of Denver Adult Enrichment Program, FlyteCO Tower and the Weld County Flight 629 Memorial Committee to unveil at the old Stapleton Airport tower a permanent memorial to the victims and first responders this tragedy; and

WHEREAS, volunteers from the Denver Police Museum have spent countless hours researching the victims' family trees resulting in many families traveling to our city and attending the special activities to honor their loved ones; and

WHEREAS, today we honor the victims and acknowledge the tremendous pain that each family suffered at this act of cruelty as we individually say each victim's name:

F.E. "Jack" Ambrose, Samuel Arthur, Bror and Irene Beckstrom, John Bomelyn, Frank Brennan, Louise Bunch, Brad and Carol Bynum, Thomas Crouch, Barbara Cruse, Carl Deist, John Des Jardins, James and Sarah Dorey, Gurney and Elizabeth Edwards, Helen Fitzpatrick and son James, Lee Hall, Virgil and Goldie Herman, Elton Hickok, Jacqueline Hinds, Marion Hobgood, John Jungels, Daisy King, Gerald and Patricia Lipke, Lela McClain, Stewart and Suzanne Morgan, Peggy Peddicord, James Purvis, Herbert Robertson, Harold Sandstead, Sally Scofield, Jesse Sizemore, James Straud, Clarence Todd, Ralph and Minnie VanValin, Donald White and Alma Winsor.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT PROCLAIMED BY THE DENVER CITY COUNCIL that November 1, 2025, is recognized as United Airlines Flight 629 Victims Memorial Day in the City and County of Denver:

Section 1: The Denver City and County Building shall be lit blue to honor the victims, their families and the first responders on the evenings of October 31 and November 1, 2025.

Section 2: The Clerk and Recorder shall affix the seal of the City and County of Denver to this proclamation and transmit copies to the victims' families, the Denver Police Museum, History Colorado, Wings Over the Rockies, The CELL, University of Denver Adult Enrichment Program, FlyteCO Tower, and the Weld County United 629 Memorial Committee.

PASSED BY THE COUNCIL October 27, 2025

PRESIDENT