

DENVER CITY COUNCIL



Proclamation No. 25-0037 Honoring Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Colorado Holiday Commission and Marade

WHEREAS, the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., a renowned humanitarian, on April 4, 1968, spurred an unstoppable and unapologetic movement to honor Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. with a nationwide holiday in the United States of America; and

WHEREAS, the Colorado Black community, clergy, civil rights organizations, elected officials, freedom fighters, and people from all walks of life launched an effort forward for this great American to be so honored because of his ability to change our nation and the world; and

WHEREAS, this legal holiday and march is not only an opportunity for remembrance but also an opportunity to protest and confront the historic and institutionalized racism, sexism, and prejudice that persists in our institutions and society, providing an opportunity to continue Dr. King's legacy to fight for a more perfect union; and

WHEREAS, the path to designate a legal holiday in Colorado was championed by leaders in the Colorado General Assembly who, over the years, included Colorado State Senator George W. Brown, Colorado State Representative Wellington E. Webb, Colorado State Representative King M. Trimble, Colorado State Representative Arie P. Taylor, and Colorado State Representative Wilma J. Webb; and

WHEREAS, in 1984, Representative Wilma J. Webb successfully introduced and carried Colorado House Bill HB 1201 which was adopted by the 54th Colorado General Assembly on March 26, 1984, commemorating and observing the birthday of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.; and

WHEREAS, the first Martin Luther King Jr. Colorado Holiday Commission, consisting of over 79 members and chaired by State Representative Wilma Webb, was established by Governor Richard D. Lamm after Mrs. Coretta Scott King and Representative Webb urged its creation, and the commission planned the inaugural holiday, first observed on Monday, January 20, 1986, and on the third Monday of January each year thereafter; and

WHEREAS, an estimated crowd of 15,000 Coloradoans gathered at the Martin Luther King, Jr. sculpture in Denver City Park for the Martin Marade that January morning in 1986. The term Marade was coined by commission chairperson Representative Wilma Webb, as a combination of "march" and "parade": a parade to celebrate the victories achieved in combating injustices of the past, and a non-violent march to confront injustices in the future; and

WHEREAS, the Marade, held annually, is the second-largest march and parade in the nation celebrating Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., drawing an average of 60,000 participants each year; and

WHEREAS, countless believers in Dr. King's idea that all men and women are created equal have worked fervently from all directions to assure that generations to come will have the benefit of the legacy of Dr. King; and

WHEREAS, this year's Marade is on Monday, January 20, 2025, starting at Denver City Park and ending at Civic Center Park.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT PROCLAIMED BY THE DENVER CITY COUNCIL:

Section 1. That the Denver City Council honors and celebrates the history and legacy of the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Colorado Holiday Commission and Marade.

Section 2. That the Clerk and Recorder of the City and County of Denver shall affix the seal of the City and County of Denver to this proclamation and that a copy be transmitted to Dr. Vern L. Howard, Chairman of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday Commission.

PASSED BY THE COUNCIL January 13, 2025

PRESIDENT

