

BY COUNCIL MEMBER DENZEL ANTON MCCAMPBELL

RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF DECLARING MAY 1, 2026, AS MAY DAY IN THE CITY OF DETROIT AND TO CELEBRATE THE POWER OF THE WORKING PEOPLE IN THIS CITY.

- WHEREAS**, May Day, or International Workers' Day, observed on May 1st each year, has its roots in the labor struggles of the United States and has become a global day of solidarity celebrated by working people in more than one hundred countries around the world; and
- WHEREAS**, May Day commemorates the Haymarket affair of 1886, when workers in Chicago fought for the eight-hour workday—down from the usual 10-14 hours—a demand that required decades of organizing, sacrifice, and collective action to achieve; and when police attacked a peaceful rally at Haymarket Square, many workers and police died in the subsequent violence, and four union leaders were tried and executed on trumped-up charges of incitement; and
- WHEREAS**, in Detroit, nearly 4,000 workers went on strike that first May Day in 1886, demanding a shorter workweek from rail-car companies and other employers, demonstrating our city's long history of worker solidarity and collective action; and
- WHEREAS**, the gains won by labor movements have transformed working conditions across the world: the weekend, workplace safety standards, child labor laws, and the right to organize all exist because workers demanded them and fought for them collectively; and
- WHEREAS**, in 2026, working people face renewed challenges as billionaires and multinational corporations accumulate unprecedented wealth while wages stagnate, benefits erode, rising prices climb beyond the reach of ordinary families, and immigrant workers face ICE raids and deportation; and
- WHEREAS**, labor union approval among Americans has reached 70 percent—its highest level in decades—yet union membership has fallen below 10 percent of the workforce, signaling that workers want collective representation but face structural barriers to achieving it; and
- WHEREAS**, the National Labor Relations Board, the federal agency tasked with protecting workers' right to organize, remains understaffed, under-resourced, and under attack by the President, leading to massive case backlogs that delay justice for workers and embolden employers to violate workers' rights with impunity; and
- WHEREAS**, anti-worker forces spend millions of dollars on electoral and union-busting campaigns to weaken labor protections, undermine workers' power, and ensure that elected officials serve billionaire interests rather than the needs of working families; and
- WHEREAS**, in Detroit—a city built by the labor and creativity of working people—we understand that genuine power does not flow from wealth or politics alone, but from the collective action, solidarity, and determination of organized people; and
- WHEREAS**, the only force capable of winning back power for working people is the organized working class itself—when workers tell their stories, when workers name the injustice they face, when workers identify who benefits from their exploitation, and when workers invite one another into collective action, the balance of power shifts; and

WHEREAS, May Day 2026 is an opportunity to recommit to the work of organizing, to celebrate the wins workers have achieved through collective struggle, and to build the power necessary to win the dignity, equity, and economic security that all workers deserve; and

WHEREAS, the City of Detroit recognizes that the future of our city depends on lifting the conditions of working people, including a living wage, on ensuring that economic growth benefits workers and their families, and on standing in solidarity with workers fighting for justice everywhere; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Detroit City Council does hereby commemorate May Day on May 1, 2026, and recognizes it as a day to celebrate the power, dignity, and solidarity of working people throughout Detroit, Michigan, the United States, and the world; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Detroit City Council calls upon all people in our city to join in the celebration of May Day by participating in events and actions that honor workers, build solidarity, and advance the collective power of working people to win the changes our communities need and deserve.