

ENROLLED ORIGINAL

A CEREMONIAL RESOLUTION

24-239

IN THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

September 20, 2022

To declare September 22, 2022 as Car Free Day in the District of Columbia, and to encourage Residents who are able to use more sustainable methods of travel to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and reduce traffic congestion.

WHEREAS, Car Free Day encourages commuters to choose an environmentally friendly method of transportation as opposed to using a personal vehicle;

WHEREAS, there are many sustainable transportation methods available within the District of Columbia such as the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority Metro and Bus, scooters, biking, walking, skating, and ridesharing;

WHEREAS, currently Car Free Day is recognized in 46 countries, over 2,000 cities and by the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments, representing the worldwide and local effort to reduce carbon footprints;

WHEREAS, the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority provides a sustainable transportation option as each Metrorail trip generates 40 percent less CO₂ than someone driving the same distance alone and there have been 378,452,774 trips on Metrorail and 171,027,574 trips on Metrobus since July 2018, a distance of about 3,312,291,392 miles, which translates to a reduction of almost 504,244 metric tons of CO₂ compared to traveling by car;

WHEREAS, if more than 1 million daily regional transit trips switched to driving, and roadways were not expanded, the region would initially experience at least a 25% increase in congestion during rush hours as opposed to a large decrease in congestion if more regional transit trips were switched from driving to public transit trips;

WHEREAS, transportation accounts for almost a third of greenhouse gas emissions in the United States and almost all of these emissions come from personal vehicles; however, only a small percentage of greenhouse gas emissions come from sustainable public methods of transportation such as buses and trains within the United States;

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WHEREAS, over 80 percent of urban residents are exposed to air quality levels that exceed World Health Organization limits, and a large contributor to this is pollution from transportation methods that are not sustainable;

WHEREAS, Car Free Days have already been proven to have significant effects upon pollution, such as Paris in 2015 where the first Car Free Day reduced exhaust emissions by about 40 percent in one day;

WHEREAS, if more District residents utilize sustainable methods of transportation as opposed to personal vehicles, it will lead to a reduced carbon footprint and less pollution released into the atmosphere;

WHEREAS, not every District resident has access to alternative transportation options, Car Free Day can serve as an opportunity to highlight ways in which the District should expand access to safe, accessible, and sustainable transportation options and address historical inequities that have isolated predominantly Black neighborhoods from the rest of the city;

WHEREAS, Car Free Day in the District of Columbia will benefit the local environment, encourage District residents to choose sustainable transportation options on Car Free Day, and encourage commuters to make ongoing use of these sustainable options.

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, That this resolution may be cited as “DC Car Free Day Recognition Resolution of 2022.”.

Sec. 2. The Council recognizes that policies that promote environmental sustainability and utilizing public transit will help reduce carbon emissions.

Sec. 3. This resolution shall take effect immediately.