

P R O C L A M A T I O N

WHEREAS, the Underground Railroad was an aggregate of routes and safehouses maintained by a secret network, assisting enslaved human beings seeking freedom; and

WHEREAS, the Underground Railroad was a long and virtual highway stretching from the Caribbean through the U.S. Southern and Midwestern states, and upward to Canada; this phenomenon in history began in antebellum America, lasting until the end of the Civil War in America; and

WHEREAS, it played a significant role in the eradication of slavery in the United States, and was itself the beginning of the civil rights movement; and

WHEREAS, of the myriad sites along this route to freedom, the Bruin Slave Jail, at 1707 Duke Street, in Alexandria, Va., played a role in the meta-narrative accompanying the momentum of the Underground Railroad, for here is where some of the characters and incidents in Harriet Beecher Stowe's famous novel, **Uncle Tom's Cabin**, have their literary origins; and

WHEREAS, circumstances, people and places such as this provide ample opportunity for the City of Alexandria to acknowledge and recognize the Underground Railroad and its role in the eradication of slavery in the United States, and to think on our nation's past, and present, as we as a country reflect on our nation's history, and endeavor to heal from it.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, JUSTIN M. WILSON, Mayor of the City of Alexandria, Virginia, and on behalf of the Alexandria City Council, do hereby recognize and proclaim the month of September, 2022, as:

“INTERNATIONAL UNDERGROUND RAILROAD MONTH”

In the City of Alexandria and I call this observance to the attention of all our citizens, as the City remains committed to the accurate dissemination of its history in treatment of human beings, as part of the larger experience of our nation's past.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of the City of Alexandria to be affixed this 13th day of September, 2022.

MAYOR JUSTIN M. WILSON
On behalf of the City Council
of Alexandria, Virginia

ATTEST:

Gloria A. Sitton, CMC City Clerk