



CITY OF LAUREL, MARYLAND

RESOLUTION NO. 5-2025

A RESOLUTION OF THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL OF LAUREL, MARYLAND TO PAY TRIBUTE TO EMANCIPATION DAY

Sponsored by Council President Kyla M. Clark

WHEREAS, the Mayor and City Council of Laurel, Maryland recognize that Emancipation Day is not only a commemoration of the end of slavery, but also an opportunity to honor the efforts of those who fought for freedom, reflect on the progress made, and reaffirm the ongoing commitment to justice and equality for all; and

WHEREAS, Emancipation Day, celebrated annually on November 1st, marks the historic day in 1864 when the people of Maryland, through a referendum, approved by a new State Constitution that included the abolition of slavery, thus freeing more than 87,000 enslaved individuals, including 33,295 people in Southern Maryland; and

WHEREAS, the passage of this referendum, which took place during the Civil War, was a monumental step in ending the practice of slavery in Maryland, making it one of the last Northern states to free the enslaved; and

WHEREAS, many enslaved people in Maryland, before and after the passage of the referendum, sought freedom by fleeing to Union-held areas, including Washington, D.C., where enslaved people were freed by the federal government in April 1862. Additionally, African Americans in Maryland were able to enlist in the Union Army starting in January 1863; and

WHEREAS, the legacy of Emancipation Day is not just one of freedom but also one of perseverance, resilience, and courage. The history of Emancipation Day reminds us of the struggles and sacrifices made by African Americans in Maryland and across the nation to secure their rights and dignity; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by recognizing Emancipation Day, the City of Laurel affirms its dedication to fostering an inclusive community where all residents, regardless of their background, can celebrate the ideals of liberty, equality, and human dignity.

AND, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this Resolution shall take effect on the date of its adoption.

ADOPTED this ____ day of _____, 2025.

ATTEST:

SARA A. GREEN, CPM, MMC
City Clerk

KYLA M. CLARK
President of the City Council

APPROVED this ____ day of _____, 2025.

KEITH R. SYDNOR
Mayor