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City of Detroit

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TO: COUNCIL MEMBERS

FROM: David Whitaker, Director 
Legislative Policy Division Staff

DATE: November 14, 2021

RE: **RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF 2021 SENATE BILL 653**

Councilmember Scott Benson requested that the Legislative Policy Division (LPD) draft a resolution in support of 2021 SENATE BILL 653, which supports the History Museum Authorities Act.

Attached, please find our draft of the aforementioned resolution.

Attachment

RESOLUTION BY COUNCILMEMBER SCOTT BENSON

RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF 2021 SENATE BILL 653

WHEREAS, The mission of the Detroit City Council is to promote the economic, cultural and physical welfare of Detroit's citizens through Charter-mandated legislative functions; and

WHEREAS, Michigan **Senate Bill 653**, introduced by State Senators Marshall Bullock, Erika Geiss, Mallory McMorrow, Dayna Polehanki, Paul Wojno, Sean McCann, Winnie Brinks, Sylvia Santana, Jeremy Moss, Curtis Hertel, Stephanie Chang, Jim Ananich, Jeff Irwin, Betty Jean Alexander, Adam Hollier and Wayne Schmidt, and referred to the Senate Committee on Economic and Small Business Development, was drafted to authorize the establishment of history museum authorities; whose articles must be adopted and may be amended by an affirmative vote of a majority of the members of the county board of commissioners of the county establishing the authority; to provide for the powers and duties of a history museum authority; to authorize the levy and collection of a property tax by a history museum authority. If approved, the proposed act can provide for an additional source of funding for the county's historical museums whose primary collection and facility, at the date an authority is established, are owned by a city with a population of over 500,000, through a county voter authorized tax levy, in exchange the museums must offer tangible benefits that will inure to all of the residents of the county; and

WHEREAS, The Detroit Historical Museum, which was established in 1928, whose primary collection and facility are owned by the City of Detroit, is a featured draw to the city, county and the state of Michigan from across the nation. In addition to chronicling the history of Detroit, the museum also features five permanent exhibitions that debuted in 2012: the Gallery of Innovation, the Allesee Gallery of Culture, Motor City Music, Legends Plaza, and Detroit: The Arsenal of Democracy. Also featured at the museum are the ever popular the Streets of Old Detroit, Doorway to Freedom, America's Motor City and Frontiers to Factories: Detroiters at Work, 1701-1901 exhibitions; and

WHEREAS, Additionally, in 1965, Dr. Charles Wright, an African American obstetrician and gynecologist, in partnership with a group of 33 community members, founded what is now known as The Charles H. Wright Museum of African American History (CHWMAAH), whose primary collection and facility are also owned by the City of Detroit, is an international draw, which attracts visitors from all over the globe. Today, The Charles H. Wright Museum of African American History is the world's second largest institution dedicated to the African American experience, housing over 30,000 artifacts and archival materials, features the stunning "And Still We Rise" exhibit, which encapsulates the tragedy of the

Middle Passage, to the heroism of the Civil Rights Movement and beyond, offering a comprehensive look at the history of African American resilience. The museum is also home to the Blanche Caggin Underground Railroad Collection, the Harriet Tubman Museum Collection, the Coleman A. Young Collection and the Sheffield Collection, a repository of documents of the labor movement in Detroit; and

WHEREAS, Providing for and preserving these two reservoirs of history, which each house an invaluable cornucopia of irreplaceable artifacts and collections, and draw thousands of visitors to Michigan, is paramount, **NOW THEREFORE BE IT**

RESOLVED, The Detroit City Council, as an advocate of the efficient use of taxpayer dollars, expresses its support of **Senate Bill 653** and would ask for its expeditious passage by both houses of the legislature; **NOW THEREFORE BE IT FINALLY**

RESOLVED, That this resolution be forwarded to the City of Detroit's Lansing Lobbyist, the Detroit Delegation in Lansing, the State Senate Committee on Economic and Small Business Development, and the Governor.