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2 Councilmember Charles Allen

Councilmember Robert C. White, Jr.

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8 A CEREMONIAL RESOLUTION

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12 IN THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

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16 To commemorate and recognize October 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2022, as International Wrongful Conviction Day in  
17 the District of Columbia.

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19 WHEREAS, International Wrongful Conviction Day was established on October 2, 2013,  
20 by the Innocence Network to raise awareness of the causes and remedies of wrongful conviction;

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22 WHEREAS, the Innocence Network is an affiliation of organizations dedicated to  
23 providing pro-bono legal and investigative services to individuals who have been wrongfully  
24 convicted, rectifying the causes of wrongful convictions, and supporting exonerees after their  
25 release;

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27 WHEREAS, according to the Innocence Network since 1989, over 3,200 wrongful  
28 convictions have been exposed across the United States;

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30 WHEREAS, according to the National Registry of Exonerations, individuals exonerated  
31 in 2021 spent 1,849 years incarcerated for crimes they did not commit,

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33 WHEREAS, those exonerated in 2021 served an average of 11.5 years for crimes they  
34 did not commit;

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36 WHEREAS, since 1989 24 people sentenced in the District have been exonerated;

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38 WHEREAS, the personal, social, and emotional costs of wrongful convictions  
39 are immeasurable;

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41 WHEREAS, psychological research shows that those who are wrongfully convicted  
42 suffer mental health consequences such as post-traumatic stress disorder, suicidal thoughts,  
43 anxiety, depression, institutionalization, and personality changes;

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45 WHEREAS, the District provides compensation for those who are wrongfully convicted;

47 WHEREAS, those who are wrongfully convicted are entitled to \$200,000 for each year  
48 of incarceration and \$40,000 for each year served on parole, probation, supervised release, or as  
49 a registered sex offender;

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51 WHEREAS, those who are wrongfully convicted are also entitled to \$10,000 for  
52 assistance with immediate services, reimbursement of child support payments, lifetime physical  
53 and mental health care through D.C. HealthCare Alliance, and reimbursement for tuition/fees to  
54 the University of the District of Columbia or the District of Columbia Community College or for  
55 a vocational or employment skills development program.

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57 WHEREAS, there is no amount of money that can repair the harmful effects of a  
58 wrongful conviction;

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60 WHEREAS, the right to liberty is a fundamental human right;

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62 WHEREAS, it is vital for the District to support organizations that work to identify  
63 and eliminate wrongful incarcerations;

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65 WHEREAS, Helping Educate to Advance the Rights of the Deaf (HEARD) is an all  
66 volunteer nonprofit organization that promotes equal access to the legal system for individuals  
67 who are deaf and for people with disabilities;

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69 WHEREAS, HEARD's primary focus is to help raise awareness about wrongful  
70 arrests and convictions of deaf people;

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72 WHEREAS, HEARD created and maintains the nation's only deaf prisoner database, and  
73 is working to increase representation of the deaf in the legal profession by connecting deaf youth  
74 with legal education organizations, law schools, and law firms;

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76 WHEREAS, the Mid-Atlantic Innocence Project is a member of the  
77 Innocence Network and works to prevent and correct the conviction of innocent individuals in  
78 the District of Columbia, Maryland, and Virginia;

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80 WHEREAS, the Mid-Atlantic Innocence Project has one of the highest success rates in  
81 the country for exonerating those who have been wrongfully accused; and

82  
83 WHEREAS, the DC Superior Court has an Ad Hoc Committee on Wrongful Convictions  
84 that works to establish standards and partnerships to ensure that no innocent person is convicted  
85 or imprisoned;

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87 RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, That this  
88 resolution may be cited as the "International Wrongful Conviction Day Ceremonial Recognition  
89 Resolution of 2022".

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91 Sec. 2. The Council recognizes International Wrongful Conviction Day in the District of  
92 Columbia and honors the important work of organizations that work to end wrongful convictions  
93 and help those who have been wrongfully convicted.

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Sec. 3. This resolution shall take effect immediately upon the first date of publication in the District of Columbia Register.