


DATE: March 15, 2018

TO: Honorable Members of the Rules, Elections, and Intergovernmental Relations Committee

FROM: Sharon Tso 
Chief Legislative Analyst

Council File No.18-0002-S27
Assignment No. 18-03-0224

SUBJECT: Resolution (Rodriguez) to support U.S. Postage Stamp honoring Bayard Rustin

CLA RECOMMENDATION: Adopt Resolution (Rodriguez) to include in the City's 2017-2018 Federal Legislative Program, SUPPORT for the issuance of a U.S. Postage Stamp honoring civil rights leader Bayard Rustin.

SUMMARY:

Resolution (Rodriguez), introduced March 6th, 2018, advises that Bayard Rustin was a civil rights activist who led major initiatives in the mid to late 20th century, including his role as chief organizer of the 1963 March on Washington. The Resolution further advises that Rustin's legacy advocating for communities of color, workers, and the LGBTQ community continues to inspire new generations of civil rights activists. The Resolution therefore requests that the City support the issuance of a U.S. Postage Stamp in his honor, and that the City urge the Citizen Stamp Advisory Committee of the U.S. Postal Service to approve such a stamp.

BACKGROUND:

Bayard Rustin was born in Pennsylvania on March 17th, 1912, and first became involved in civil rights activism when he moved to New York in the 1930's. He was instrumental in organizing the 1947 "Journey to Reconciliation", in which white and black people across the south rode buses together to challenge segregation laws. The event later inspired the 1961 Freedom Rides.

Rustin began working with Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. during the 1950's, helping King organize the boycott on segregated buses in Montgomery, Alabama. One of Rustin's most prominent roles as an activist was as the chief organizer of the 1963 March on Washington, DC. Again working closely with King, Rustin coordinated transportation for marchers, marshal schedules, and other logistical challenges associated with bringing hundreds of thousands of people to the national capital.

In his later years, Rustin expanded his advocacy to include workers and the LGBTQ community. In 1965, he co-founded the A. Philip Randolph Institute for black trade union members. He also remained in demand as a public speaker and regularly promoted social rights for the LGBTQ community until his death on August 24th, 1987, at the age of 75.

Many believe that Rustin's status as an openly gay man hampered his national profile as an activist during his lifetime. When President Barack Obama posthumously awarded him the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 2013, he remarked that Rustin had been denied his rightful place in civil rights history because he was openly gay during a time when one's sexuality could be considered a serious political liability.

DEPARTMENTS NOTIFIED:

None



Chris Campbell
Analyst

Attachments: 1. Resolution (Rodriguez)

RESOLUTION

RULES, ELECTIONS, INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS

WHEREAS, any official position of the City of Los Angeles with respect to legislation, rules, regulations or policies proposed to or pending before a local, state or federal governmental body must have first been adopted in the form of a Resolution by the City Council with the concurrence of the Mayor; and

WHEREAS, Bayard Rustin was a civil rights activist who led the "Journey of Reconciliation," an early version of the Freedom Rides to challenge racial segregation on interstate buses;

WHEREAS, Rustin worked closely with Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. as the chief organizer of the 1963 March on Washington;

WHEREAS, Rustin preached the gospel of nonviolence and civil disobedience on campuses, churches, and meetings around the world;


WHEREAS, Rustin also worked tirelessly throughout the middle of the 20th century as a powerful advocate for the LGBTQ community, workers, and communities of color in the United States;

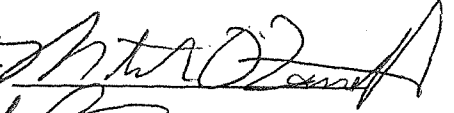



WHEREAS, as an openly gay civil rights leader, Rustin never allowed biases against his sexuality to deter his fight for underserved populations;

WHEREAS, in 2013 President Barack Obama posthumously awarded Rustin the Presidential Medal of Freedom and remarked that Rustin had been denied his rightful place as a civil rights icon because he was openly gay; and

WHEREAS, Rustin's legacy continues to inspire and energize new generations of activists seeking equality and justice for marginalized communities in Los Angeles and beyond;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, with the concurrence of the Mayor, that by the adoption of this Resolution, the City of Los Angeles hereby includes in its 2017-2018 Federal Legislative Program SUPPORT for the issuance of a commemorative U.S. Postage Stamp in honor of Bayard Rustin and URGES the Citizen Stamp Advisory Committee of the U.S. Postal Service to approve the issuance of such a stamp.

PRESENTED BY: 
MONICA RODRIGUEZ
Councilmember, 7th District

SECONDED BY: 



Paul Kutz

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