

Resolution No. 574-2025

By Council Member Polensek

AN EMERGENCY RESOLUTION

Endorsing the *Two Lights For Tomorrow* national initiative and calling on all citizens to unite in remembrance of our shared history, honoring the sacrifices made by those who fought for our independence and reminding ourselves of the values we hold dear today; and encouraging all government buildings, community centers, public spaces, and all citizens to take part in this symbolic display by prominently displaying two lights for all to see, as a way of bringing awareness to our America’s 250th anniversary for this year and beyond.

WHEREAS, the City of Cleveland recognizes the importance of honoring and commemorating the 250th anniversary of the founding of our nation and reminding our citizens of the vital significance and relevance of our founding principles and ideals that created a unique national identity worth fighting for; and

WHEREAS, the events of 1775 that began the revolution the year before independence was declared are significant moments that signaled the creation of a national identity and unity of purpose that transcended traditional geographic, cultural, and societal divides; and

WHEREAS, individuals and communities across all the colonies came together to support their fellow countrymen; and

WHEREAS, on the evening of April 18, 1775, with impending hostile action from the British army in Boston, Massachusetts, Paul Revere and William Dawes along with other alarm riders undertook a perilous ride to alert everyone in the countryside of the coming danger; and

WHEREAS, preceding their departure from Boston, a prearranged signal was set in the Old North Church steeple to ensure that the message got out and did not solely rely on just one or two alarm riders; and

WHEREAS, the two lanterns that were the signal were immortalized in Henry Wadsworth Longfellow’s poem *Paul Revere’s Ride* as “One if by land, and two if by sea” and have become an enduring symbol of American vigilance, perseverance, preparedness in the face of adversity; and

WHEREAS, those alarm riders and the citizens that answered the call to arms to serve and defend their fellow countrymen that night and the following day at the Battles of Lexington and Concord exemplify the spirit of community and shared responsibility that has defined our nation since its inception; and

WHEREAS, we are reminded, 250 years later, that the call for unity and the call to serve each other is no less relevant today than it was then; and

WHEREAS, a national initiative has been proposed through collaboration from multiple states that two lights be displayed in public spaces across the country for all to see marking that significant anniversary in April 2025 and the beginning of the 250th anniversary commemorations leading up to the Declaration of Independence on July 4, 2026; and

WHEREAS, state commissions, state governments, federal agencies, and community, heritage, and historical organizations across the country have eagerly endorsed the initiative and pledge to support and participate, and have encouraged others to do the same; and

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WHEREAS, some participating entities have also pledged to encourage an increase in community service from April 19, 2025, onward as a way to encourage understanding about the true meaning of these historical commemorations knowing that these events are not just marking history for history's sake, but rather encouraging reflection on the idea that all these historic events were endeavoring toward one common goal: the chance for a better tomorrow, together; and

WHEREAS, in the climate we find ourselves in it is imperative more than ever before that we make ourselves even more aware than usual about what our American history is all about – the good, the bad, the beautiful and the ugly.

WHEREAS, this resolution constitutes an emergency measure for the immediate preservation of public peace, property, health or safety; now therefore

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF CLEVELAND:

Section 1. That this Council endorses the *Two Lights For Tomorrow* national initiative and calls on all citizens to unite in remembrance of our shared history, honoring the sacrifices made by those who fought for our independence and reminding ourselves of the values we hold dear today; and encourages all government buildings, community centers, public spaces, and all citizens to take part in this symbolic display by prominently displaying two lights for all to see, as a way of bringing awareness to our America's 250th anniversary for this year and beyond.

Section 2. That this resolution is hereby declared to be an emergency measure and, provided it receives the affirmative vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to Council, it shall take effect and be in force immediately upon its adoption and approval by the Mayor; otherwise it shall take effect and be in force from and after the earliest period allowed by law.

/jho

4-28-2025

FOR: Council Member Polensek

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READ FIRST TIME on APRIL 28, 2025
and referred to DIRECTOR of Law;
COMMITTEE on Finance Diversity Equity and Inclusion

REPORTS

CITY CLERK

READ SECOND TIME

CITY CLERK

READ THIRD TIME

PRESIDENT

CITY CLERK

APPROVED

MAYOR

REPORT
after second Reading

PASSAGE RECOMMENDED BY
COMMITTEE ON
FINANCE, DIVERSITY, EQUITY
and INCLUSION

FILED WITH COMMITTEE