RESOLUTION NO. ___, SERIES 2026

A RESOLUTION COMMEMORATING AND RECOGNIZING OCTOBER 2, 2026 AS WRONGFUL CONVICTION DAY AND URGING STATE SUPPORT FOR COMPENSATION FOR WRONGFULLY CONVICTED KENTUCKIANS.

SPONSORED BY: COUNCIL MEMBER PARRISH-WRIGHT

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

WHEREAS, the Louisville/Jefferson County Metro Council recognizes organizations like Kentucky Innocence Project, the Chandler Project, and the Innocence Project, which work to prevent, reveal, and correct wrongful convictions, free innocent people, and support exonerees as they return home; and

WHEREAS, according to the National Registry of Exonerations, since 1989, there have been 3,852 known exonerations in the United States including twenty-three (23) exonerees in Kentucky who lost a combined 220 years of their liberty to wrongful incarceration; and

WHEREAS, in Jefferson County there are seven (7) innocent individuals – Johnetta Carr, Edwin Chandler, William Gregory, Paul Hurt, Kerry Porter, Keith West, and Michael VonAllmen – who were exonerated after being wrongfully convicted of crimes they did not commit; and

WHEREAS, coerced pleas, eyewitness misidentification, false confessions, inadequate legal defense, official misconduct, misapplication of forensic science, systemic inequities, unreliable and unregulated informant testimony are all factors that lead to a wrongful conviction, with perjury or a false confession a contributing factor in

73% of exonerations in Kentucky compared to 64% of exonerations nationally, and false or misleading forensic evidence is a contributing factor in 50% of exonerations in Kentucky compared to 29% of exonerations nationally; and

WHEREAS, wrongful convictions are an injustice that rob an innocent person of their life, liberty, and dignity and often lead to severe physical and mental detriments such as post-traumatic stress disorder, anxiety, and depression; and

WHEREAS, wrongfully convicted individuals miss out on life moments like birthdays and funerals, and are denied educational and career opportunities as well as the ability to save for retirement; and

WHEREAS, upon release from incarceration, wrongfully convicted individuals face a multitude of barriers without any support from the state and face stigma, housing discrimination, employment discrimination and lack of access to basic needs; and

WHEREAS, nothing can undo the years of harm but providing financial compensation and support services is one way the Commonwealth can offer restitution and help innocent Kentuckians heal and rebuild their lives; and

WHEREAS, Kentucky is only one of 10 states in the country that does not offer compensation to wrongfully convicted people and Kentucky Senate Bill 131 (2026), which passed the Senate Judiciary Committee, would have created a process to provide much-needed financial compensation to eligible exonerees but expired when the 2026 legislative session ended.

NOW, THEREFORE, IT BE RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL OF THE LOUISVILLE/JEFFERSON COUNTY METRO COUNCIL (“COUNCIL”) AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION I: The Council recognizes October 2, 2026 as International Wrongful Conviction Day in Louisville-Jefferson County.

SECTION II: The Council acknowledges the impact wrongful convictions have on our residents and their families, especially communities of color, and therefore urges the state legislature to pass legislation, like Senate Bill 131, which will compensate wrongfully convicted Kentuckians.

SECTION III: The Council Clerk shall transmit copies of this resolution to the Governor of Kentucky, the Speaker of the Kentucky House of Representatives, the President of the Kentucky Senate, and the Attorney General of Kentucky.

SECTION IV: This Resolution shall take effect upon passage and approval or otherwise becoming law.

_____	_____
Sonya Harward Metro Council Clerk	Brent Ackerson President of the Council
_____	_____
Craig Greenberg Mayor	Approval Date

APPROVED AS TO FORM:
Michael J. O'Connell
Jefferson County Attorney

By: _____