

RESOLUTION NO. \_\_\_\_\_ - 22

A RESOLUTION CELEBRATING THE ADOPTION OF THE  
MAGNA CARTA ON JUNE 15, 1215

WHEREAS, the Magna Carta, also known as the Great Charter, was issued on June 15, 1215 and was the first document to put into legal writing the principle that the king and his government were not above the law. It sought to prevent the king from exploiting his power, and placed limits of royal authority by establishing law as a power in itself; and

WHEREAS, a number of principles in the Constitutions of the United States of America and of Colorado can be traced back to the Magna Carta, including

A. Limitations on government power and ensuring due process:

9. *Neither we nor our bailiffs will seize any land or any rent for any debt, so long as the debtor's chattels are sufficient to pay the debt; . . .*

20. *A free man may not be amerced [i.e. fined] for a small offense, except according to the nature of the offence; . . . .*

28. *No constable, or any of our bailiffs, shall take anyone's corn or any other chattels, unless he immediately pays for them in cash, . . . .*

30. *No sheriff or bailiff of ours, or anyone else may take any free man's horses or carts for transporting things, except with the free man's agreement.*

38. *No bailiff is in future to put anyone to law by his accusation alone, without trustworthy witnesses being brought forward.*

39. *No free man shall be seized or imprisoned, or stripped of his rights or possessions, or outlawed or exiled, or deprived of his standing in any other way, nor will we proceed with force against him, or send others to do so, except by the lawful judgement of his equals or by the law of the land.*

40. *To no one will we sell, to no one deny or delay right or justice.*

B. Limitations on taxes:

2&3. *Limiting or prohibiting certain taxes: . . . . he is to have his inheritance without paying relief and without a fine.*

7. *After the death of her husband a widow shall have her marriage portion and inheritance straightaway and without difficulty, nor shall she pay anything for her dower, her marriage portion or her inheritance. . . .*

12. *No scutage or other aid is to be levied in our realm, except by the common counsel of our realm. . . .*

C. Religious liberty:

63. *[T]he English Church shall be free and that men in our kingdom have and hold all the aforesaid liberties, right and grants, well and in peace, freely and quietly, fully and completely, for themselves and their heirs of us and our heirs, in all things and in all places, in perpetuity as has been said.*

WHEREAS, for 18th-century political thinkers like Benjamin Franklin and Thomas Jefferson, the Magna Carta was a potent symbol of liberty and the natural rights of man against an oppressive or unjust government; and

WHEREAS, by July 4, 1776, the idea that government could, and should be, limited by the consent of its citizens and that government must protect individual rights was widely seen as springing forth from the Magna Carta; and

WHEREAS, the Magna Carta was the foundation and building blocks for the Declaration of Independence and United States Constitution and many of its messages and ideals still hold true to this day; and

WHEREAS, when President Barack Obama commemorated the 800<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Magna Carta, he stated, “Centuries ago, when kings, emperors, and warlords reigned over much of the world, it was this extraordinary document — agreed to by the King of England in 1215 — that first spelled out the rights and liberties of man. The ideals of the Magna Carta inspired America's forefathers to define and protect many of the rights expressed in our founding documents, which we continue to cherish today;” and

WHEREAS, the Magna Carta's adoption began a process of recognizing the rights of the people and the limits of government that has continued for more than eight centuries.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF COLORADO SPRINGS:**

Section 1. The City Council celebrates the passage of the Magna Carta on June 15, 1215.

Dated at Colorado Springs, Colorado this 14<sup>th</sup> day of June, 2022.

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Council President

ATTEST:

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Sarah B. Johnson, City Clerk