

23-R-15

A RESOLUTION

**Memorializing the President of the United States and Congress
to Establish the Carl Sandburg National Historic Trail
in the State of Illinois**

WHEREAS, Carl August Sandburg was born January 6, 1878, in a three-room cottage in Galesburg, Illinois, to August and Clara Sandburg, immigrants from Sweden who met and married in the United States. One of seven children, he left school at the age of 13 to work and help support his family. He volunteered for military service during the Spanish-American War and afterward, qualified as a veteran for college admission despite his lack of a high school diploma. At Lombard College in Galesburg, Sandburg began to write poetry and prose, and his first booklets were published by his favorite professor, Philip Green Wright.

WHEREAS, Sandburg left college without graduating and worked as a traveling salesman before becoming an organizer and orator for the Social Democratic Party of Wisconsin in 1907. At party headquarters, he met Lilian Steichen, younger sister of the painter and photographer Edward Steichen, who was already making a name for himself in New York and Paris. Sandburg and Lilian Steichen were married in 1908, and moved to Chicago in 1912, where Sandburg went to work as a journalist, sometimes using a pseudonym and writing for business journals and socialist journals and newspapers. During nearly five decades as a newspaperman, he was a local news reporter, an investigative reporter, a war correspondent, a movie critic, and a nationally syndicated columnist.

WHEREAS, Encouraged by his wife, Sandburg kept writing poetry, most of it free verse. His first serious recognition as a poet came in 1914 when Harriet Monroe, editor of *Poetry: A Magazine of Verse*, published several of his poems in her magazine. Sandburg's first book, *Chicago Poems*, was published in 1916, and his last collection of poems, *Honey and Salt*, appeared in 1963, when he was 85. He was celebrated in the United States as the "Poet of the People."

WHEREAS, Sandburg was a popular platform performer, playing the guitar and singing American folk music, and reading his poetry and prose. In 1926 he published the two-volume biography *Abraham Lincoln: The Prairie Years*, and continued researching and writing Lincoln's life. The four-volume *Abraham Lincoln: The War Years*, published in 1939, won the Pulitzer Prize in history. Sandburg's *Complete Poems* (1950) received the Pulitzer Prize in poetry, and contained all of his books of poetry: *Chicago Poems* (1916), *Cornhuskers* (1918), *Smoke and Steel* (1920), *Slabs of the Sunburnt West* (1922), *Good Morning, America* (1928), and *The People, Yes* (1936).

WHEREAS, Sandburg also published stories and poems for children, an anthology of American folk music, an autobiography of his early years, and a novel, *Remembrance Rock* (1948). He collaborated with Edward Steichen, his brother-in-law, on the text for the landmark photographic exhibition and book, *The Family of Man* (1955).

WHEREAS, Sandburg lived the last 22 years of his life at Connemara, a 245-acre farm in Flat Rock, North Carolina, now a National Historic Site and a unit of the National Park Service. When he died there July 22, 1967, at the age of 89, he was

survived by his wife, their three daughters, Margaret, Janet and Helga, and Helga's two children. In September 1967, nearly 6,000 people gathered at the Lincoln Memorial in Washington for a national memorial tribute to the Poet of the People. On October 1, 1967, Carl Sandburg's ashes were buried at his Galesburg, Illinois, birthplace, now a state historic site.

**NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF
THE CITY OF EVANSTON, COOK COUNTY, ILLINOIS:**

SECTION 1: The foregoing recitals are hereby found as fact and incorporated herein by reference.

SECTION 2: The City of Evanston supports the state of Illinois' request to the Congress of the United States to pass, and the President to sign, a bill establishing the Carl Sandburg National Historic Trail; and

SECTION 3: Copies of this resolution shall be transmitted to the President of the United States, the President and Secretary of the United States Senate, the Speaker and the Clerk of the United States House of Representatives, the Chair of the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, the Chair of the House Committee on Natural Resources, and Illinois' Senators and Representatives in Congress.

SECTION 4: This Resolution 23-R-15 shall be in full force and effect from and after its passage and approval in the manner provided by law.

Elizabeth B Tisdahl
Elizabeth B. Tisdahl, Mayor

Attest:

Rodney Greene
Rodney Greene, City Clerk

Adopted: May 11, 2015