



# City of Chicago



R2015-391

Office of the City Clerk

## Document Tracking Sheet

<b>Meeting Date:</b>	5/6/2015
<b>Sponsor(s):</b>	Balcer (11)
<b>Type:</b>	Resolution
<b>Title:</b>	Recommendation for use of Dr. Mary Edwards Walker image on 20 Dollar bill
<b>Committee(s) Assignment:</b>	

## R E S O L U T I O N

**WHEREAS**, The United States Senate is considering replacing the image of President Andrew Jackson on the \$20 bill with the face of a distinguished woman. Doctor Mary Edwards Walker would be an outstanding choice for this honor; and

**WHEREAS**, Born on November 26, 1832 in Oswego, New York, Doctor Walker earned her medical degree in 1855 from New York's Syracuse Medical College. She was the only woman in her graduating class, and only the second woman in the United States to graduate from medical school; and

**WHEREAS**, After earning her medical degree, Doctor Walker married fellow student Albert Miller. Together they established a joint medical practice in Rome, New York. In 1860, Doctor Walker attended the Bowen Collegiate Institute in Hopkinton, Iowa. She was suspended from the college when she insisted on joining its all-male debating society; and

**WHEREAS**, At the outbreak of the Civil War, Doctor Walker volunteered to serve as a civilian surgeon in the Union Army. The Army refused her offer. Instead, she was required to volunteer as a nurse. She ministered nursing care to Union soldiers at the First Battle of Bull Run, where she served on the front lines, and also at the Battle of Fredericksburg; and

**WHEREAS**, In 1863, the Union Army, which found itself in desperate need of skilled surgeons on the battlefield, hired Doctor Walker as a civilian Acting Assistant Surgeon. Dr. Walker became the first-ever female surgeon to be employed by the U.S. Army. Later, she was appointed as Assistant Surgeon of the 52<sup>nd</sup> Ohio Infantry. She performed surgery on Union soldiers during the Battle of Atlanta; and

**WHEREAS**, On April 10, 1864, Doctor Walker was captured by Confederate forces when she courageously crossed enemy lines to treat wounded civilians. She was charged as a spy and placed in a prisoner of war camp. She was released from the camp on August 12, 1864 when medical prisoners were exchanged by both sides; and

**WHEREAS**, On November 11, 1865, President Andrew Johnson awarded Doctor Walker the Congressional Medal of Honor, the highest military award conferred by the United States of America. To this day, Doctor Walker is the only woman to have received this Medal and she is one of only eight civilians ever honored in this way; and

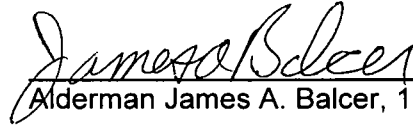
**WHEREAS**, When the Civil War ended, Doctor Walker supervised a prison for women in Louisville, Kentucky. She later worked as the head of an orphanage in Tennessee; and

**WHEREAS**, Doctor Walker authored two books on women's rights and she actively participated in the women's suffrage movement with Susan B. Anthony. Sadly, Doctor Walker never lived to witness the fruits of her labour. She died on February 21, 1919, shortly before the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the United States Constitution was ratified, giving women the right to vote; and

**WHEREAS**, Doctor Walker, along with many other exceptional women, is eminently worthy of the honor of having her likeness grace the face of our Nation's \$20 bills; now, therefore,

**BE IT RESOLVED**, That we, the Mayor and Members of the City Council of the City of Chicago, assembled this sixth day of May, 2015, do hereby recommend that Doctor Mary Edwards Walker be considered for the distinction of having her image appear on \$20 bills; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,** That a suitable copy of this resolution be presented to President Barack Obama, Secretary of Treasury Jacob J. Lew, Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, and Senate Minority Leader Harry Reid, as a sign of our concern about this important matter.

  
Alderman James A. Balcer, 11<sup>th</sup> Ward