



City of Pittsburgh

510 City-County Building
414 Grant Street
Pittsburgh, PA 15219

Text File

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Committee: City Council

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WHEREAS, President-elect Abraham Lincoln, as part of his train route to his first presidential inauguration, arrived in Allegheny City at the Pittsburgh, Fort Wayne and Chicago Rail Road Depot on Federal Street, on February 14, 1861 at 8:00 p.m.; and

WHEREAS, the day was a long and difficult trip from Columbus through heavy rain, made worse by a freight train derailment which further delayed the President-elect's train by three hours; and

WHEREAS, the delegation boarded a carriage for a ride across the river and through mud soaked and crowded streets to Pittsburgh's Monongahela House, at the northwest corner of Fort Pitt and Smithfield Streets; and

WHEREAS, despite being weary and hoarse, Mr. Lincoln responded to the crowd's demands for a speech that evening by speaking from the balcony of the Monongahela House. His words that night included the following: "You know that it has not been my custom, since I started on the route to Washington, to make long speeches; I am rather inclined to silence, [``That's right"] and whether that be wise or not, it is at least more unusual now-a-days to find a man who can hold his tongue than to find one who cannot;" and

WHEREAS, the following morning, February 15, at 8:30am Lincoln made good on his promise to speak and ended up making the longest speech-almost thirty minutes-of the entire journey of the inaugural train; and

WHEREAS, the inaugural train then departed Pittsburgh at about 10:00 a.m. en route to Cleveland, Ohio; and

WHEREAS, two commemorations of Lincoln's visit still exist-the Lincoln window at Smithfield United Church of Christ and the Lincoln medallion in Strawberry Way; and

WHEREAS, the bed on which Lincoln is believed to have slept is now on display at the Senator John Heinz History Center.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that Pittsburgh City Council does hereby honor the sesquicentennial anniversary of President-elect Abraham Lincoln's visit to Pittsburgh and commends the Senator John Heinz History Center for its mission as an educational institution that engages and inspires a large and diverse audience with links to the past, understanding in the present, and guidance for the future by preserving regional history and presenting the American experience with a Western Pennsylvania connection..