



2011 ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION 6

April 14, 2011 – Introduced by Representatives SINICKI, RICHARDS, MASON, DANOU, MILROY, TURNER, KESSLER, TOLES, BARCA, ROYS, SEIDEL, PASCH, POPE-ROBERTS, STASKUNAS, YOUNG, GRIGSBY, E. COGGS, CLARK, BERNARD SCHABER, BEWLEY, POCAN, HINTZ, BERCEAU, MOLEPSKE JR, RINGHAND, HULSEY, ZAMARRIPA, ZEPNICK, JORGENSEN and FIELDS. Referred to Committee on Rules.

1 **Relating to:** commemorating the Bay View labor strike and massacre.

2 Whereas, Wisconsin workers and reformers made important contributions to
3 the history of labor in the United States, helping to enact legislation such as Worker’s
4 Compensation and Unemployment Insurance, models which, in turn, were adopted
5 by other states; and

6 Whereas, in the 1880s workers in Milwaukee began to advocate for the
7 eight-hour workday, which we now take for granted; and

8 Whereas, until that time workers generally labored at physically punishing
9 jobs for many hours each day; and

10 Whereas, on May 1, 1886, a national campaign to require that all employers
11 adopt a standard eight-hour day culminated when workers’ unions urged all
12 American workers to cease labor until their employers met the demand; and

13 Whereas, in Milwaukee, civil parades and demonstrations followed as striking
14 workers shut down factories peaceably and without violence during the first five
15 days of May 1886; and

1 Whereas, the morning of May 2nd revealed the turmoil among Milwaukee's
2 laborers, as more than a dozen strikes had begun in the city, involving the carpenters,
3 coal heavers, sewer diggers, iron moulders, teamsters, common laborers, and other
4 workmen striking for better pay; and

5 Whereas, during this period, the good citizens of Milwaukee began to receive
6 word of the bloody conflict in Chicago's Haymarket Square, where police had killed
7 demonstrators; and

8 Whereas, news of the bloodshed at Haymarket Square elevated tensions among
9 the citizenry of Milwaukee and many of Milwaukee's workers and businessmen
10 began to prepare for armed confrontation; and

11 Whereas, the last grand factory to remain open was the North Chicago Railroad
12 Rolling Mills Steel Foundry, in Bay View; and

13 Whereas on May 5th, a crowd of demonstrators went to the rolling mill to enjoin
14 the workers to participate in the general strike; and

15 Whereas, the assemblage of striking workers was fired upon by National Guard
16 forces, under the order of Governor Jeremiah Rusk, killing seven people and
17 wounding four; and

18 Whereas, the events of that day will remain in the historic and cultural legacy
19 of Wisconsin forever, serving as a reminder of the sacrifices our forebearers made so
20 that we might lead happier, more prosperous lives; now, therefore, be it

21 ***Resolved by the assembly, That*** the Wisconsin state assembly
22 commemorates this pivotal series of events and recognizes May 2nd as the
23 anniversary of the Bay View labor strike and tragedy.

24

(END)