

1 Introduced by Council Members Gaffney, Jr. and Clark-Murray:
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4 **RESOLUTION 2025-412**

5 A RESOLUTION HONORING AND COMMENDING JOE JONES,
6 "THE HERO ON THE BRIDGE", FOR HIS SELFLESS
7 HEROISM DURING THE CIVIL RIGHTS MARCH ACROSS THE
8 EDMUND PETTUS BRIDGE IN SELMA, ALABAMA ON MARCH
9 7, 1965; PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.
10

11 **WHEREAS,** on March 7, 1965, a day now etched in history as
12 "Bloody Sunday," a peaceful march for voting rights in Selma, Alabama
13 was violently disrupted on the Edmund Pettus Bridge by State Troopers
14 wielding billy clubs and tear gas against unarmed demonstrators; and

15 **WHEREAS,** among the marchers was a then 18-year-old Joe Jones,
16 who bore witness to injustice and responded not with fear, but with
17 compassion and courage that would reverberate across generations; and

18 **WHEREAS,** the photograph of Joe Jones was immortalized as one
19 of the most iconic images of the Civil Rights era, captured as he
20 knelt in the smoke and chaos to cradle the body of the brutally beaten
21 and tear-gassed activist Amelia Boynton, offering aid and dignity to
22 a fallen woman when others ran for safety; and

23 **WHEREAS,** the "Hero on the Bridge" image, disseminated
24 worldwide, became a galvanizing symbol of the Civil Rights Movement,
25 influencing public sentiment and strengthening the moral resolve
26 behind the eventual passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965; and

27 **WHEREAS,** Joe Jones later served his country, with distinction,
28 in the Vietnam War, embodying the spirit of service both at home and
29 abroad, and remained a living testimony to the power of individual
30 courage in the face of systemic injustice; and

31 **WHEREAS,** after his service ended, Joe Jones made a career as

1 a civil service Air Force employee and was transferred to Cecil Field
2 in 1974; he and his wife Christina made Jacksonville their home, and
3 raised their family on the Westside of the City; and

4 **WHEREAS,** for decades, the name of the young man in the photo
5 remained unknown to history, until it was recognized by his daughter,
6 Cassandra, through a social media posting and rightfully reclaimed
7 Joe Jones as a quiet giant of American heroism; and

8 **WHEREAS,** in commemorating the 50th Anniversary of Bloody
9 Sunday, Joe Jones crossed the Edmund Pettus Bridge again, this time
10 unimpeded, joined by President Obama and Amelia Boynton, the woman
11 Joe Jones helped rescue off the bridge; Joe Jones received a Foot
12 Soldiers medal on a ribbon that day, in honor of his role in that
13 transformative moment, affirming that ordinary citizens can perform
14 extraordinary acts that shape the moral arc of a nation; and

15 **WHEREAS,** the City of Jacksonville recognizes the significance
16 of Joe Jones' contribution, not only as a figure in a photograph, but
17 as a living embodiment of resilience, humanity, and the enduring
18 struggle for civil rights and equality; now therefore

19 **BE IT RESOLVED** by the Council of the City of Jacksonville:

20 **Section 1.** The City Council hereby honors and commends Joe
21 Jones, whose compassion on the Edmund Pettus Bridge stands as a
22 testament to the spirit of courage. His story is an enduring reminder
23 to current and future generations that the bridge to justice is often
24 built by the quiet strength of those who choose to act in the moment
25 history calls.

26 **Section 2. Effective Date.** This Resolution shall become
27 effective upon signature by the Mayor or upon becoming effective
28 without the Mayor's signature.

Form Approved:

/s/ Shannon MacGillis

Office of General Counsel

Legislation Prepared By: Colleen Hampsey, City Council Research

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