

CITY COUNCIL RESEARCH DIVISION LEGISLATIVE SUMMARY



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Bill Type and Number: Ordinance 2024-544

Introducer/Sponsor(s): Council Member Gay

Date of Introduction: July 23, 2024

Committee(s) of Reference: NCSPHS, R, TEU

Date of Analysis: July 25, 2024

Type of Action: Street re-naming

Bill Summary: This bill renames an existing private road extending from Heckscher Drive to a dead end in Council District 2 to “J.D. Thompson Street.” It waives Subsection 745.105(i)(2), Ordinance Code, which requires that the honoree of a street re-naming be deceased for at least five years. It directs the Legislative Services Division to send a copy of this legislation to the Addressing Section of the Planning and Development Department for processing, implementation, and coordination with 911 Emergency, the Jacksonville Fire and Rescue Department, the Post Office, the Traffic Engineering Division of the Public Works Department, and other affected agencies and organizations.

Background Information: J.D. Thompson and Randall Champion, JEA linemen, were working on two separate utility poles on West 26th Street in Jacksonville on July 17, 1967, when Mr. Champion accidentally contacted power lines which shocked him with 2,400 volts of direct electricity. The shock rendered Mr. Champion unconscious and suspended in his safety harness more than 20 feet off the ground. Mr. Thompson quickly climbed down the utility pole on which he was working, a few hundred feet away, ran to Mr. Champion, and administered mouth-to-mouth resuscitation, which successfully awakened Mr. Champion. A photograph of this incident, with the caption “The Kiss of Life,” taken by Rocco Morabito, was published in the Jacksonville Journal to great acclaim, winning a Pulitzer Prize. The Council finds it appropriate to name an existing private street to further memorialize the heroics of Mr. Thompson.

Policy Impact Area: Street re-naming

Fiscal Impact: Minimal for signage

Analyst: Webb