

1 Introduced by Council Members Gaffney, Jr. and Clark-Murray and
2 Co-Sponsored by Council Members Salem, Pittman and Peluso:
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5 **RESOLUTION 2025-412-A**

6 A RESOLUTION HONORING AND COMMENDING JOE JONES,
7 "THE HERO ON THE BRIDGE", FOR HIS SELFLESS
8 HEROISM DURING THE CIVIL RIGHTS MARCH ACROSS THE
9 EDMUND PETTUS BRIDGE IN SELMA, ALABAMA ON MARCH
10 7, 1965; PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.
11

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

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

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

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

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

1 **WHEREAS,** after his service ended, Joe Jones made a career as
2 a civil service Air Force employee and was transferred to Cecil Field
3 in 1974; he and his wife Christina made Jacksonville their home, and
4 raised their family on the Westside of the City; and

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

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

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

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

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

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

/s/ Mary E. Staffopoulos

Office of General Counsel

Legislation Prepared By: Colleen Hampsey, City Council Research

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