

Introduced by Council Member Johnson and Co-Sponsored by Council Members Amaro, Arias, Boylan, J. Carlucci, Carlucci, Carrico, Clark-Murray, Diamond, Freeman, Gaffney, Jr., Gay, Howland, Lahnen, Miller, Peluso, Pittman, Salem and White and amended on the Floor of Council:

RESOLUTION 2025-748-A

A RESOLUTION HONORING THE MEMORY OF JOE AND ADA LANG: PARENTS, PARTNERS, AND PEOPLE OF FAITH, AND RECOGNIZING THEIR LIVES AND LEGACY, ACKNOWLEDGING THE VIOLENCE THAT TOOK THEIR LIVES IN 1921, AND AFFIRMING THE CITY OF JACKSONVILLE'S COMMITMENT TO REMEMBRANCE, TRUTH, AND HEALING; PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

WHEREAS, Joe and Ada Lang, an African American couple raising six children in Jacksonville's Dinsmore community, sought to build lives defined by family, faith, and hard work, with their days rooted in love and the promise of tomorrow; and

WHEREAS, on August 28, 1921, their home was invaded by racial terror, and both Joe and Ada were murdered in cold blood, their children fleeing into the fields, scattered, traumatized, and forever shaped by violence that the law refused to name; and

WHEREAS, the accused faced what newspapers called a "scandalous murder trial," but an all-white jury acquitted them, leaving the Lang family denied justice, silenced by erasure, and haunted by questions that lingered for generations; and

WHEREAS, for decades the story of Joe and Ada Lang lived only in whispers, in fading clippings, and fractured memory, until recent work by the Jacksonville Community Remembrance Project, in partnership with the Equal Justice Initiative, helped to restore

1 their truth and return their names to the conscience of this city;
2 and

3 **WHEREAS**, historian Dr. David Jamison of Edward Waters
4 University, working alongside the Langs' great-granddaughter, Maliza
5 Lang McMillan, led an oral history project that unearthed the family's
6 story, stitching together memory, testimony, and scholarship into a
7 narrative long buried by silence; and

8 **WHEREAS**, remembrance is both lament and labor, the Jacksonville
9 Community Remembrance Project has led this city to confront its
10 history, to connect with descendants, and to stand in witness at
11 ceremonies of soil, song, and story; and

12 **WHEREAS**, on September 14, 2025, the Jacksonville community
13 gathered at a soil collection ceremony to honor Joe and Ada Lang,
14 placing earth from the site of their deaths into jars that bear their
15 names, one to remain here in Jacksonville, and the other to join the
16 sacred soil at the National Memorial for Peace and Justice in
17 Montgomery, Alabama; and

18 **WHEREAS**, this act of remembrance is a vow that Joe and Ada Lang
19 will never again be buried in silence, that their memory will guide
20 us toward a more just, inclusive, and humane future, and that
21 Jacksonville will be a city where truth-telling is the soil of
22 healing; now therefore

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

24 **Section 1.** The City Council hereby formally honors and
25 remembers Joe and Ada Lang, affirming their humanity, dignity, and
26 the enduring significance of their lives. The Council expresses its
27 deepest sympathy to the descendants of Joe and Ada Lang, and affirms
28 its commitment to truth-telling, remembrance, and community healing,
29 acknowledging the work of Dr. David Jamison, the Jacksonville
30 Community Remembrance Project, and the Equal Justice Initiative.

31 **Section 2. Effective Date.** This Resolution shall become

effective upon signature by the Mayor or upon becoming effective
without the Mayor's signature.

Form Approved:

/s/ Mary E. Staffopoulos

Office of General Counsel

Legislation Prepared By: Colleen Hampsey, City Council Research

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