

1 Introduced by Council Member Priestly Jackson:
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4 **RESOLUTION 2022-429**

5 A RESOLUTION HONORING AND COMMEMORATING THE LIFE
6 AND NUMEROUS ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF SOLLIE MITCHELL;
7 REQUESTING EMERGENCY PASSAGE UPON INTRODUCTION;
8 PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.
9

10 **WHEREAS**, Sollie Mitchell, a native of Ocilla, Georgia, was born
11 in June of 1918, graduated from Stanton High School in Jacksonville
12 and attended the institution that later became Florida Memorial
13 College, then located in St. Augustine; and

14 **WHEREAS**, Mr. Mitchell was drafted to serve in the U.S. Army in
15 World War II and was a company clerk at Fort Benning, Georgia, and a
16 firearms instructor at the Aberdeen Proving Ground in Maryland before
17 seeing combat in the Pacific Theater in the Philippines and New Guinea
18 and serving as a clerk on the staff at the headquarters of General
19 Douglas McArthur. His military service ended with the rank of staff
20 sergeant after a tour in Japan as part of the U.S. occupying force
21 after the end of the war; and

22 **WHEREAS**, returning to the United States in late 1945, Sollie
23 Mitchell became a Pullman porter with the Seaboard Coast Line Railroad
24 and a member of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters where he
25 renewed his family's long-time acquaintance with civil rights pioneer
26 A. Philip Randolph and became the Secretary of the Jacksonville
27 chapter of the union and a trusted assistant to Mr. Randolph. A
28 highlight of his career with the railroad came in 1963 when he was
29 the only Pullman porter serving on the Freedom Train that carried
30 passengers from Jacksonville to the famous March on Washington where
31 Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. delivered his "I have a dream" speech;

1 and

2 **WHEREAS**, Mr. Mitchell had a lifelong dedication to service and
3 education, and that exhibited itself most prominently in his decades
4 of membership and active participation in the Alpha Phi Alpha
5 Fraternity and Prince Hall Freemasonry. He was coronated a Sovereign
6 Grand Inspector General of the Southern Jurisdiction in 1993 and
7 attended nearly 40 United Supreme Council sessions. He was named an
8 Honorary Past Master of the Most Worshipful Union Grand Lodge of
9 Florida, Sovereign Grand Commander Emeritus, and Honorary Past
10 Imperial Potentate, and the Prince Hall Lodge in downtown Jacksonville
11 was named the Sollie Mitchell Lodge #377 in his honor; and

12 **WHEREAS**, Sollie Mitchell married Mary Alva Barnett in 1951 and
13 was as devoted to her for 62 years before her passing as he was to
14 the Historic Mt. Zion AME Church where he worshiped for decades; and

15 **WHEREAS**, it was with deep sadness that the Council learned of
16 the recent passing of the legendary Sollie Mitchell at the age of
17 103; now therefore

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

19 **Section 1.** The City Council hereby honors and commemorates
20 the life and countless accomplishments of pioneering civil rights and
21 labor movement leader Sollie Mitchell and extends to his family,
22 friends, and many admirers the City's sincere condolences on his
23 passing. Mr. Mitchell was a legendary figure in Jacksonville and his
24 wealth of first-hand historical knowledge of some of the great events
25 in our nation's history and his dedication to the improvement of his
26 community will be greatly missed.

27 **Section 2. Requesting emergency passage upon introduction**
28 **pursuant to Council Rule 4.901.** Emergency passage upon
29 introduction of this Resolution is requested in order to commemorate
30 the passing of Mr. Mitchell in a timely manner.

31 **Section 3. Effective Date.** This Resolution shall become

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

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4 Form Approved:

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7 /s/ Paige H. Johnston

8 Office of General Counsel

9 Legislation Prepared By: Jeff Clements, City Council Research

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