



Office of the City Clerk

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Chicago City Council
September 21, 2022

MEMORIAL RESOLUTION HONORING THE LIFE OF MONTFORD POINT MARINE RAYMOND ALLEN MURRAY JR.

WHEREAS, It is with great sadness that we learn of the passing of Raymond Allen Murray Jr., one of the Nation's original Montford Point Marines; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Murray is remembered by his loved ones and community, as as a family man, boxer, mentor, steward, and both a patriot who fought for his country and pioneer who fought against its injustices; and

WHEREAS, Most exceptionally, Sergeant Murray is remembered as a recipient of the Congressional Gold Medal-the highest civilian award given by the United States Congress-awarded to persons who made a major and long-standing impact on American history and culture; and

WHEREAS, Today, members of the U.S. Armed Forces come from diverse backgrounds, however, it was not until June 25, 1941, when President Roosevelt issued Executive Order 8802, that discriminatory hiring practices in the defense industry were explicitly prohibited; and

WHEREAS, In 1942, a year later, the U.S. Marine Corps welcomed the first class of recruits to the newly established Montford Point Base-a continued segregated part of Camp Lejeune in Jacksonville, North Carolina; and

WHEREAS, For the next seven years, 20,000 Black Marines eagerly arrived to Montford Point Base in search of social freedom, just to be met with segregation and unending abuse; and

WHEREAS, However, their continued resistance would later lead to Black leadership and military integration before any intervention from the federal government; and

WHEREAS, Almost one million Black men served in World War II, demonstrating to the entire Nation the unequivocal dedication and loyalty of a group being so discriminated against; and

WHEREAS, In 1943, aligned with many of the Marine Corps' values, Mr. Murray enlisted and became one of the Nation's first Black Marines to report to Montford Point Base; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Murray and the rest of the Montford Point Marines valiantly served the Nation in WWII, and eventually, garnered the respect and honor they were long overdue; and

WHEREAS, Aside from his military might, Mr. Murray loved the sport of boxing; and

WHEREAS, While serving in Yokohama, Japan, he won the featherweight title; and

WHEREAS, After his service, Mr. Murray returned to Chicago where he became a leader and mentor to countless individuals through his work as a boxing coach at the Chicago Park District and various other gyms throughout the City, in addition to his motivational conversations and support with women at a nearby hallway house and inmates in local jails—all of which ultimately led to much communal success; and

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WHEREAS, Mr. Murray is survived by his wife, Esther Murray, and daughter, La Donna Bonner; and, now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, That we, the Mayor and Members of the City Council of the City of Chicago gathered here on this 21st Day of September 2022, do hereby express our sorrow with the passing of Raymond Allen Murray Jr., and extend our sincere condolences to his family, friends, and the countless individuals impacted by his loss.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That we, the Mayor and Members of the City Council of the City of Chicago honor Raymond Allen Murray, Jr.'s legacy, including the historical significance of his service as one of the Nation's original Montford Point Marines.

Gilbert Villegas Alderman, 36th Ward

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be presented to Mr. Murray's family as a symbol of gratitude for his selfless contributions to the Nation and the City of Chicago.

