

RESOLUTION NUMBER 139

Ronald Isley

WHEREAS, Ronald Isley, born in Cincinnati, Ohio is a very accomplished singer and is known as the lead singer and founding member of the family music group, The Isley Brothers; and

WHEREAS, born the third of six brothers, Ronald, like many of his siblings, began his career in the church. He began singing at the age of three, winning a \$25 war bond for singing at a spiritual contest at the Union Baptist Church. By the age of seven, Ronald was singing onstage at venues such as the Regal Theater in Chicago, alongside Dinah Washington and a few other notables; and

WHEREAS, in 1954, when Ronald was only 13, he and his brothers, Rudolph, O'Kelly and Vernon Isley, formed the original lineup of what would become the Isley Brothers. Beginning as a gospel quartet, they began singing alongside their father, O'Kelly, Sr. (also a singer in his own right at the time), and their mother Sallye (the group's first pianist); and

WHEREAS, Ronald carried on as the leader of the Isleys after Vernon's 1955 death in a bicycle accident at age 13. In 1957, the Isleys moved out of Cincinnati and headed to New York City, where they began recording doo-wop material for several record labels. After several failed attempts, the brothers hit pay dirt after cultivating a song that had been created after the brothers' inspired performance of Jackie Wilson's "Lonely Teardrops" at a 1959 Washington, D.C. show; and

WHEREAS, after signing with RCA Records, the group released "Shout", a song that has since become a legendary rock and roll staple; and

WHEREAS, after Kelly Isley's death in 1986 and Rudy Isley's exit to fulfill a dream of ministry in 1989, Ronald has carried on with the Isley Brothers name either as a solo artist or with accompanying help from the group's younger brothers, much more prominently, Ernie Isley; and

WHEREAS, in 1990, Ronald scored a top ten duet with Rod Stewart with a cover of his brothers' hit, "This Old Heart of Mine (Is Weak for You)" and in 2003, Ronald recorded a solo album, Here I Am: Bacharach Meets Isley, with Burt Bacharach. In addition, Ronald Isley became a sought-after hook singer for hip-hop acts such as R. Kelly, Warren G., 2Pac and UGK. Ronald released his first solo album Mr. I on November 30, 2010. Also in 2010, he received a "Legend Award at the Soul Train Music Award; and

WHEREAS, his many fans are looking forward to his performance in Saint Louis on September 17, 2011.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Aldermen of the City of St. Louis that we pause in our deliberations to recognize Ronald Isley and we wish him continued success, achievement and accomplishment and we further direct the Clerk of this Board to spread a copy of this Resolution across the minutes of these proceedings and to prepare a commemorative copy to the end that it may be presented to our honoree at a time and place deemed appropriate by the Sponsor.

Introduced on the 8th of July, 2011 by:

Honorable Marlene Davis, Alderwoman 19th Ward

Adopted this the 8th of July, 2011 as attested by:

David W. Sweeney
Clerk, Board of Aldermen

Lewis E. Reed
President, Board of Aldermen