



Legislation Text

File #: R-160-23, **Version:** 1

Councilwoman Williams

Memorializing the life of William Griffin and renaming the boxing gym at Rev. HV Savage Park to be the William Griffin Boxing Gym.

WHEREAS, William Griffin, a life-long resident of Toledo who was born on September 22, 1937 to Oscar and Mattie Griffin, and passed on March 14, 2023. Known affectionately as Coach Griff because of his commitment and dedication to coaching the youth of Toledo in the fine arts of boxing and life; and

WHEREAS, Bill graduated from McComber Vocational High School in 1954, then immediately enlisted in the Air Force and served active duty during the Korean War. Upon his return home, Bill was one of the first African American members of the local carpenter's union, working successfully in construction for 25 years. He went on to work for the City of Toledo as a Rehab Inspector for the Department of Neighborhoods for 28 years, retiring in the year 2000; and

WHEREAS, Bill was a boxer himself back in the day who, along with his brother Buster, ran the Soul City Boxing Gym. When he had to hang up his own "golden gloves", Bill devoted over 60 years to coaching individuals who went on to become some of the greatest boxers in the world, including IBF super-middleweight world champion Lindell Holmes, the legendary Tommy Hearns, and Toledo's current champion Albert "Prince" Bell. Bill also coached Team USA when they competed against Cuba; and

WHEREAS, Bill not only coached, but he oversaw the regular operation of the Reverend HV Savage Park and was a fixture in the neighborhood. He commanded a high level of respect from generations of community youth that visited the park, or crossed the threshold of the gym. Bill always instilled a sense of responsibility in the youth whose lives he touched, setting a strong example of character and integrity. His heart was always with the kids, especially for those who didn't have a father figure. He often reached into his own pocket and paid for things the youth needed to be successful, or just to survive. He was a mentor to hundreds of children throughout the community and was well-loved by everyone who knew him; and

WHEREAS, Bill was also a man of strong faith who loved his family. Marrying his dear wife Mildred on June 23, 1966, he and Mildred had three children, daughter Linda Griffin-Arrington, son Anthony Griffin, and son William Kevin Griffin (deceased). Bill always beamed with pride when any of his three grandchildren, five great grandchildren, or his one great great grandchild was nearby; NOW, THEREFORE,

Be it resolved by the Council of the City of Toledo:

SECTION 1. That the life of William Griffin is hereby recognized and memorialized, by renaming the boxing gym at Rev. HV Savage Park to be the William Griffin Boxing Gym, and that his many contributions to our community be lauded and condolences be extended to his family and friends on the loss of their loved one.

SECTION 2. That this Resolution shall take effect and be in force from and after the earliest period

allowed by law.

Passed: March 21, 2023, as an emergency measure: yeas 11, nays 0.

Attest:

Gerald E. Dendinger
Clerk of Council

Matt Cherry
President of Council

Approved:

March 21, 2023
Wade Kapszukiewicz
Mayor