

Proclamation

OFFICE OF MAYOR FRANK G. JACKSON

City of Cleveland, Ohio

In Loving Memory of

The Honorable Louis Stokes

A Life and Legacy of Service

Whereas, it is with deepest sympathy that I join with the citizens of the City of Cleveland and our great nation in mourning the loss of The Honorable Louis Stokes, one of the greatest public servants and men in history; and,

Whereas, there really are no words to ease the pain of such a devastating loss. I hope the family, friends and community find comfort in their memories of Mr. Stokes and that these memories give them the courage to face the difficult days ahead. As we remember Mr. Stokes and all that he meant to us, let us also remember to be thankful for the fragile gift of life. Let us seek peace from the knowledge that he lives on in his family's love for him for love knows no bounds. May these loving thoughts bring you peace and understanding as you seek comfort and strength from those who mourn with you and support you in your grief; and,

Whereas, born on February 23, 1925, Mr. Stokes was a devoted and loving husband, family member, friend, mentor and a tireless public servant. The contributions he made to the Cleveland community and to the nation will never be forgotten. He lived his life in the moment, helping others at every turn and providing guidance to all those in need, from his constituents to his family and friends. He embraced, with dignity, the immense responsibility of public service, particularly that of an elected official; and,

Whereas, Mr. Stokes never intended a life in politics. He was fiercely dedicated to human and civil rights and only sought political office at the urging of his brother - Cleveland's first African American Mayor, Carl. It was because of his brother's influence that he became the first African American Congressman in Ohio, earning prominent roles in Congress and changing history. He served as a member of the executive committee of the Cuyahoga County Democratic Party, member of the American Civil Liberties Union, and Vice President of the Cleveland branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP); and,

Whereas, Mr. Stokes served his country in many ways; he was a proud veteran of the United States Army; a Congressman from 1969 to 1998; and a civil rights and community leader. In 1953, he began practicing law in Cleveland and retired from Squires and Sanders as Senior Counsel in 2012. A well-educated man, he attended Western Reserve University and Cleveland Marshall School of Law. He received numerous prestigious awards including his induction into the International Civil Rights Walk of Fame. His accomplishments are many and his devotion and dedication to the people of Cleveland is immeasurable; and,

Whereas, Mr. Stokes was preceded in death by his parents, Charles and Louise Stokes; and brother, Carl. He leaves behind to celebrate his life, his devoted wife of 55 years, Jeanette (Jay) Francis; loving children, Shelly, Angela, Louis C. and Lorene; precious grandchildren, Alexandra, Kimberly, Brett, Eric, Grant, Kelley, Nicolette; dearest nephew, Cordell; a host of other caring relatives, treasured friends and a grateful community. Throughout his lifetime, Mr. Stokes undeniably improved the lives of those in Cleveland and advanced civil rights for all. He was a remarkable man, who leaves a legacy of grace and integrity. He will truly be missed by all.

Now therefore, I, Frank G. Jackson, the 56th Mayor of the City of Cleveland, do hereby offer sincere condolences to the family and friends of The Honorable Louis Stokes. I humbly request that all citizens join with me in extending our prayers and deepest condolences to the family and friends of Mr. Stokes during this time of bereavement.

In witness thereof, I have set my hand and caused the Corporate Seal of the City of Cleveland to be affixed on this 24th day of August in the year 2015.

Mayor Frank G. Jackson