

**TESTIMONIAL RESOLUTION FOR MS. BILLIE JEAN HARRIS CELEBRATING 100 YEARS - A LEGACY OF LOVE, STRENGTH, AND ENDURANCE
SUBMITTED BY COUNCILMEMBER FRED DURHAL**

WHEREAS Born Lillian Guillory on March 25, 1925, in Eunice, Louisiana, Billie Jean Harris was the cherished daughter of Arthur Guillory and Virginia Jenkins Guillory. After the loss of her mother, she moved to Detroit, Michigan, where she was lovingly raised by her Aunt Rebecca Smith, who lived to an extraordinary age of 103; **and**

WHEREAS Billie Jean worked at Cunningham Diner in Highland Park, where her Black identity was unknown to many of the regular patrons. During the closing years of World War II, she stayed at Savannah Harris' boarding house in Detroit's Historic Black Bottom neighborhood, a place where she met Nick Harris, the man who would become the love of her life. After marrying Nick, they built a home together, initially living on Euclid and Blaine Streets before settling in Northwest Detroit near Wyoming and 8 Mile. There, they raised their eight children: Leonard, Linda, Deborah, Barbara, Kenneth, Pam, Craig, and Patricia; **and**

WHEREAS A woman who deeply appreciated nature, Billie Jean had a passion for gardening. She cultivated mustard greens, turnips, collards, and even nurtured a strawberry bush. Her home became a haven for both her family and local wildlife, as she delighted in feeding the neighborhood squirrels and birds. Billie Jean's adventurous spirit led her to travel to the Bahamas and across Africa, broadening her horizons and embracing the beauty of the world; **and**

WHEREAS A devoted member of Holy Hope Heritage Church, Billie Jean's life centered around her faith, family, and the simple pleasures that brought her joy. She often credited her long life to a diet rich in white fish and fresh fruits, paired with a daily routine of watching *Jeopardy!* and *Wheel of Fortune*; **and**

WHEREAS Billie Jean Harris, now at 100 years, stands as a living testament to resilience, love, and the enduring strength of family. Her legacy, shaped by decades of wisdom and grace, will continue to inspire generations to come.
NOW, THEREFORE BE IT

RESOLVED That Councilmember Fred Durhal III and members of Detroit City Council hereby honor Ms. Billie Jean Harris, for her remarkable resilience, her enduring legacy of love, strength and wisdom. Thank you for the invaluable years you've shared, we pray that God continues to bless you with health and happiness in the years to come.

03.08.25 - TCB

MARCH 8, 2025