



PROCLAMATION

ONE CITY. ONE JACKSONVILLE.

WHEREAS: In 1899, Jacksonville native James Weldon Johnson wrote the poem "Lift Ev'ry Voice and Sing" and his brother, John Rosamond Johnson, set the poem to music to honor President Abraham Lincoln's birthday; and

WHEREAS: The song was first performed publicly by a choir of 500 schoolchildren at Stanton School in Jacksonville, FL, on February 12, 1900, where James Weldon Johnson was principal; and

WHEREAS: After its release, the song spread across the South and other parts of the country; and

WHEREAS: In 1919, "Lift Ev'ry Voice and Sing" was adopted by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) as its official song. The song has since been sung in schools, at graduation ceremonies, military assemblies, sporting events, and other civic meetings, often alongside "The Star Spangled Banner"; and

WHEREAS: The song became known as the "Black National Anthem" and is one of the most cherished songs of the African American civil rights movement; and

WHEREAS: The song has a special meaning for African American history but can resonate with all Americans. "Lift Ev'ry Voice and Sing" represents a celebration of liberty, a remembrance of struggle, and a hopeful prayer for a prosperous future.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, LENNY CURRY, by virtue of the authority vested in me as mayor of Jacksonville, Florida, do hereby recognize

THE 120TH ANNIVERSARY OF "LIFT EV'RY VOICE AND SING"

and encourage all citizens to honor Jacksonville's history and celebrate the song's contribution to our city and nation.



IN WITNESS THEREOF, this 4th day of February
in the year Two Thousand Twenty

Lenny Curry

MAYOR

CITY OF JACKSONVILLE, FLORIDA