

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, Captain William “Bill” Pickney, sailing legend and Bronzeville native, completed his life’s journey on August 1, 2023; and

WHEREAS, In acknowledgement of his historic adventures and advocacy to boost educational efforts and the sailing community, the City of Chicago proudly recognizes Captain Pickney’s contributions to the City; and

WHEREAS, The Chicago City Council has been informed of Captain Pickney’s passing by the Honorable Lamont J. Robinson, Alderman of the 4th Ward; and

WHEREAS, Captain Pickney was born to Marion Henderson and William Deltorius Pickney in Chicago on September 15, 1935; and

WHEREAS, Early in his career, Captain Pickney served as a hospital corpsman in the U.S. Navy from 1956 to 1964, and became a licensed master of steam, power, and sail vessels of the U.S. Coast Guard in 1986; and

WHEREAS, In 1990, Captain Pickney became the first Black sailor to solo-circumnavigate the world; after setting off from Boston, Massachusetts, his journey would span 27,000 miles and last 22 months; and

WHEREAS, After circumnavigating the world, Captain Pickney then set out on a voyage to retrace the Middle Passage to highlight the history of the Atlantic slave trade; working with a team of teachers and PBS, the Captain helped to create an academic curriculum and television special on the Middle Passage; and

WHEREAS, Later, Captain Pickney would serve as first captain of the Amistad, a replica of the 1839 vessel best known as the schooner where an unprecedented slave uprising occurred; and

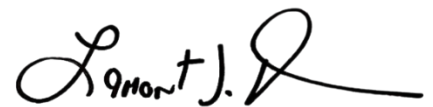
WHEREAS, Throughout his life, Captain Pickney was rightly recognized for his efforts, receiving honorary degrees from Massachusetts Maritime Academy, Southern Connecticut State University, and Becker College; being inducted into the National Sailing Hall of Fame and receiving its Lifetime Achievement Award; and being named Chicagoan of the Year in 1999 by Chicago Magazine; and

WHEREAS, Captain Bill Pickney is survived by his wife, Migdalia Vachier Pickney; his daughter, Angela Walton; his sister, Naomi Pickney; and two grandchildren; and

WHEREAS, A remarkable man and sailor who did so much to educate and inspire others to reach for their dreams, Captain William “Bill” Pickney’s life and legacy will continue to serve as a generation for generations to come.

BE IT RESOLVED, That we, the Mayor and the members of the City Council of the City of Chicago, assembled this first day of November 2023, do hereby declare June 9, 2024 as “Captain Bill Pickney Day” in the City of Chicago; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be presented to the family of Captain Bill Pickney as a sign of our honor and respect.



LAMONT J. ROBINSON
Alderman, 4th Ward