

Resolution No. 625-2020

By Council Members Mooney, Conwell, Bishop, Brancatelli, Cleveland, Griffin, Hairston, Johnson, B. Jones, J. Jones, Kazy, Kelley, McCormack, Polensek, Santana, Slife and Zone

AN EMERGENCY RESOLUTION

Urging the Cleveland Metropolitan School District to change the name of Louis Agassiz Elementary School to Louis Stokes Elementary School.

WHEREAS, Louis Agassiz was a Swiss biologist and geologist born in 1807; and

WHEREAS, in the last two centuries, Agassiz's reputation has been tarnished and legacy called into question because of, among other things, his belief in scientific racism: the pseudoscientific belief that empirical evidence exists to support or justify racism, racial inferiority or racial superiority; and

WHEREAS, Louis Stokes, born in 1925 in Cleveland, was an attorney, civil rights pioneer and politician; he served 15 terms in the United States House of Representatives representing the east side of Cleveland and was the first African American congressman elected in the state of Ohio; and

WHEREAS, Louis and his brother Carl grew up in the Outhwaite Homes housing projects; he attended Central High School, served in the Army during World War II, graduated from Western Reserve University and Cleveland Marshall College of Law; and

WHEREAS, Stokes began practicing law in Cleveland in 1953; he argued Terry v. Ohio—the famous “stop and frisk” case—in front of the U.S. Supreme Court in 1968; and

WHEREAS, Stokes was elected to Congress in 1968 and served there 30 years, retiring in 1999; and

WHEREAS, during his time in the House of Representatives, Stokes was an influential member of the House Appropriations Committee, Chair of the House select committee investigating the assassinations of John F. Kennedy and Martin Luther King Jr., served on the committee investigating the Iran-Contra affair, was Chairman of the House Ethics Committee, and was a founding member of the Congressional Black Caucus; and

WHEREAS, in this time of civil unrest because of continued racial injustices, it is also important to continue to recognize Louis Stokes' many accomplishments as a leader and role model whose very life showed that nothing serves to justify racism; and

WHEREAS, this resolution constitutes an emergency measure for the immediate preservation of public peace, property, health or safety, now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF CLEVELAND:

Section 1. That this Council urges the Cleveland Metropolitan School District to change the name of Louis Agassiz Elementary School to Louis Stokes Elementary School.

Section 2. That the Clerk of Council is directed to transmit copies of this resolution to Eric Gordon, CEO, Cleveland Metropolitan School District.

Section 3. That this resolution is hereby declared to be an emergency measure and, provided it receives the affirmative vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to Council, it shall take effect and be in force immediately upon its adoption and approval by the Mayor; otherwise it shall take effect and be in force from and after the earliest period allowed by law.

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READ FIRST TIME on AUGUST 12, 2020
and referred to DIRECTOR of Law;
COMMITTEE on Finance

REPORTS

CITY CLERK

READ SECOND TIME

CITY CLERK

READ THIRD TIME

PRESIDENT

CITY CLERK

APPROVED

MAYOR

Recorded Vol. **107** Page _____

Published in the City Record _____

REPORT
after second Reading

PASSAGE RECOMMENDED BY
COMMITTEE ON
FINANCE

FILED WITH COMMITTEE

