



Legislation Text

File #: ORD. 2020-260, **Version:** 1

To designate the 1200 and 1300 blocks of Idlewood Avenue in honor of Larry Jerome Bland.

WHEREAS, the late Larry Jerome Bland became involved in music at an early age, having attended Maggie L. Walker High School where he became drum major of the Marching Maggie Walker Dragons; and

WHEREAS, also in high school, he was handed the director's baton of the Volunteer Choir at the Second Baptist Church by the late Rev. Odie D. Brown, and a short time later, when he became a student at Virginia State University, Larry Jerome Bland founded the acclaimed Virginia State University Gospel Chorale, which continues to perform to this day; and

WHEREAS, after graduating from Virginia State University with a degree in Vocal Music Education, Larry Jerome Bland went on to work in the international entertainment industry, which included many contributions to the successful partnership between the Discovery Channel and the British Broadcasting Corporation; and

WHEREAS, in the city of Richmond, many residents developed a deep and enduring love for the performances of Larry Bland and the Volunteer Choir, especially at their annual appearances at the Dogwood Dell Amphitheater, where they often performed for crowds of over 12,000 gospel music fans; and

WHEREAS, over the years, Larry Bland and the Volunteer Choir achieved many stellar accomplishments, including appearances at such well-known venues as Wolf Trap Amphitheater and Constitution Hall in Washington, D.C., and performances with the Richmond Symphony Pops, the Richmond Opera Company, the Richmond Center for the Performing Arts, and at the inauguration of two of Virginia's governors, the Honorable Chuck Robb and the Honorable Ralph Northam, as well as for part of Virginia's 2007 Royal Welcome of Her Majesty The Queen of England; and

WHEREAS, Larry Jerome Bland was blessed to be able to passionately live his life filled with music and the world was blessed by the musical gifts that he shared with all; and

WHEREAS, the City desires to memorialize Larry Jerome Bland's contributions to the city of Richmond by designating the 1200 and 1300 blocks of Idlewood Avenue in his honor; and

WHEREAS, because this designation is honorary only, the provisions of sections 8-7 through 8-10 of the Code of the City of Richmond (2015), as amended, do not apply to the designation made hereby or to any signs erected pursuant to this ordinance;

NOW, THEREFORE,

THE CITY OF RICHMOND HEREBY ORDAINS:

§ 1. **Designation of Street Blocks for Honorary Name.** The 1200 and 1300 blocks of Idlewood Avenue shall be designated in honor of Larry Jerome Bland, pursuant to this ordinance.

§ 2. **Effect of Designation.** The designation of the street blocks made pursuant to this ordinance shall be honorary only, shall not replace the existing name of the street, and shall have no effect on the address of any property with an address on the designated street blocks. The sole effect of designation pursuant to this ordinance shall be to authorize the placement of commemorative signs in accordance with this ordinance memorializing the designation in honor of the named person.

§ 3. **Administration of Ordinance.** The Department of Public Works shall implement this ordinance by installing, as soon as practicable after the adoption of this ordinance, and maintaining commemorative signs in accordance with this section. The commemorative signs shall be clearly distinct from the street signs used to identify the street blocks in question such that a reasonable person could not conclude that the commemorative signs reflect the actual name of the street. The commemorative signs shall be affixed to the street sign for the street designated in section 1 of this ordinance located at each end of the street blocks designated in section 1 of this ordinance and shall bear the name of the person set forth in section 1 of this ordinance.

§ 4. **Effective Date.** This ordinance shall be in force and effect upon adoption.