



# Louisville Metro Government

## Legislation Text

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File #: R-228-14, Version: 1

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### RESOLUTION NO. \_\_\_\_\_, SERIES 2014

#### **A RESOLUTION HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF REV. JOSEPH RONALD SAMS.**

**Sponsored By: Councilwoman Attica Scott**

**WHEREAS**, Rev. Joseph Ronald Sams, the son of the late Joseph and Janie Sams, was born on November 10, 1948, in Demopolis, Alabama. He was called to his eternal rest and entered the Kingdom of God on Tuesday, January 8, 2013.

**WHEREAS**, Rev. Sams was a graduate of U.S. Jones High School, Alabama A&M University, Samford University, and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. He pledged Kappa Alpha Psi fraternity at Alabama A&M University.

**WHEREAS**, Rev. Sams accepted Christ at an early age at Eastern Star Baptist Church in Demopolis, Alabama under Rev. P.E. Green. He was called into the ministry in 1977 and ordained in August 1980 at the Sixth Avenue Baptist Church in Birmingham, Alabama under the leadership of Rev. John Thomas Porter. He later worked as an assistant to the pastor at the First Baptist Church of Jeffersontown under the leadership of Rev. Thurmond Coleman. Rev. Sams was called to pastor New Covenant Baptist Church in July 1990 and served there as pastor for 22 years. Under his visionary leadership, a magnificent new edifice was erected in September 2000. Over subsequent years, surrounding properties and a 24-passenger church bus were also acquired.

**WHEREAS**, Rev. Sams began his academic career 28 years ago when he joined the faculty of Simmons College of Kentucky during the presidency of the late Dr. W. J. Hodge. He established

himself as an Old Testament scholar. Rev. Sams was known for his rigorous challenging of students to think and to stretch their minds. He encouraged his students to be receptive to new truths. New students to his class quickly learned that while he allowed open dialogue, they must be ready with concrete facts to defend and support their position.

**WHEREAS**, during his tenure at Simmons, Rev. Sams always offered his support willingly in any capacity when asked. Under Dr. Hodge, he served in many capacities such as Instructor, Special Assistant to President, Chair of the Academic committee on revising Old Testament curriculum, and Special Project Coordinator.

**WHEREAS**, as Executive Vice President, Rev. Sams took upon himself to pursue accreditation for Simmons beginning in 2006. With tenacious faith, Rev. Sams led the administrative team of Simmons to attain Pre-accreditation status with accreditation to be attained in 2014. His efforts also made it possible for Simmons to become eligible to offer federal financial aid to eligible students.

**WHEREAS**, in addition to writing Sunday School literature for R. H. Boyd Publishing, Rev. Sams also authored "On Board With Jesus", a book that addresses the five basic responsibilities of a Christian disciple.

**WHEREAS**, in the early 1970s in Alabama, he sold insurance at the Independent Order of Foresters Life Insurance Company and he also sold cars at Bart Starr Lincoln-Mercury dealership. In the early 1980s, he worked as a manager of a Steak 'N Eggs restaurant. In the early 2000s, he worked part-time as a stockperson for Walmart and donated all of his earnings to the New Covenant Baptist Church State Rally whose proceeds benefit the Building Fund.

**WHEREAS**, Rev. Sams was a music lover and an amateur musician, who played the trumpet,

flugelhorn, bass guitar, and the drums. He was the consummate student who enjoyed learning about a myriad of topics. He was a barbecue master that grilled twelve months out of the year. He loved sports, riding his Honda Goldwing 1000 motorcycle, working in the yard, and spending time with his family. Above all he loved the Christmas season. Many a year he could be seen in the front yard, on his hands and knees in his camouflage gear, measuring to the inch, Santa's runway lights. These are just a fraction of our most treasured memories of this unique and brilliant man.

**WHEREAS**, as he would say, we are "chitlin, coleslaw, Kool-Aid glad" to have loved this man as a husband and father. We were honored to hold his hand while he completed one journey and began another.

**WHEREAS**, He leaves to cherish his memory, his wife of 41 years, Cathelma; his two daughters, Allesandra Sams-Jones (James), and Alexandria Sams; his grandson, Derrick-Anthony Jones; his niece, Lenairria Creer (Major), his nephew, Joseph Colvin (Yvonne); his New Covenant church family, and a host of extended family and friends.

**BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL OF THE LOUISVILLE/JEFFERSON COUNTY METRO GOVERNMENT (THE COUNCIL) AS FOLLOWS:**

**SECTION I:** that Rev. Joseph Ronald Sams's life and service to Louisville Metro be honored and memorialized on 40<sup>th</sup> Street between Hale & Sunset, in Louisville, Kentucky designated as "Rev. Joseph Ronald Sams Way". Department of Public Works is hereby directed to effect the same as soon as practicable following the passage of this resolution.

**SECTION II:** This Resolution shall take effect upon its passage and approval.

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Stephen Ott Metro Council Clerk

H.

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President of the Council

Jim King

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Fischer Mayor

Greg

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Approval

**APPROVED AS TO FORM AND LEGALITY:**

Michael J. O'Connell  
Jefferson County Attorney

BY: \_\_\_\_\_

Resolution Honoring Rev Sams ROC sjm 6 Oct 2014