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2 Councilmember Janeese Lewis George
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8 Councilmember Brianne K. Nadeau
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14 Councilmember Charles Allen
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17 Councilmember Mary Cheh
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_____ Councilmember Kenyan R. McDuffie
_____ Councilmember Trayon White, Sr.
_____ Councilmember Vincent C. Gray
_____ Councilmember Brooke Pinto
_____ Councilmember Christina Henderson
_____ Councilmember Robert C. White, Jr.

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A CEREMONIAL RESOLUTION

IN THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

28 To recognize and honor Mr. Vernon E. Jordan Jr., a pioneer civil rights activist, lawyer, and
29 businessman, for his contributions to the Black community and the District of Columbia,
30 on the occasion of his death at 85 years of age.

31 WHEREAS, Mr. Jordan was born August 15, 1935 in Atlanta, Georgia, to parents Mary
32 Belle and Vernon E. Jordan Sr.;

33 WHEREAS, Mr. Jordan was raised in the University Homes housing projects in Atlanta
34 and was an honors graduate of David T. Howard High School;

35 WHEREAS, Mr. Jordan worked as a head dishwasher, head waiter, and bartender at his
36 mother's catering company at a young age to support his family before leaving Atlanta to pursue
37 a bachelor's degree in Political Science from DePauw University in Greencastle, Indiana;

38 WHEREAS, Mr. Jordan was the only Black student of 400 students in the 1957
39 graduating class at DePauw University;

40 WHEREAS, Mr. Jordan continued his education and went on to earn his Juris Doctorate
41 (1960) from Howard University School of Law, where he received instruction from Thurgood
42 Marshall and other historic Black thought leaders;

43 WHEREAS, Mr. Jordan was a member of Omega Psi Phi and Sigma Pi Phi fraternities;

44 WHEREAS, after completing law school, Mr. Jordan returned to Atlanta and joined the
45 law offices of civil rights activist Donald L. Hollowell;

46 WHEREAS, Mr. Jordan was a part of the legal team that desegregated the University of
47 Georgia and obtained admittance for the University's first two Black students. The legal team
48 successfully sued the University of Georgia for racial discrimination in their admissions policies;

49 WHEREAS, Mr. Jordan left his private law practice to work at civil rights organizations
50 and became the Georgia Field Director for the NAACP in 1961;

51 WHEREAS, Mr. Jordan served as Director of the Voter's Education Project at the
52 Southern Regional Council where he worked for four years;

53 WHEREAS, Mr. Jordan was the Executive Director of the United Negro College Fund in
54 New York City;

55 WHEREAS, under his leadership, the United Negro College Fund raised \$10 million
56 through innovative campaigns, the most ever raised by a director at the time, to benefit African
57 American serving institutions;

58 WHEREAS, Mr. Jordan was the National Urban League Director from 1971 to 1981,
59 where he successfully lobbied for public policy changes that advanced the civil rights movement;
60 he also started the famed *State of Black America* report that is released yearly;

61 WHEREAS, Mr. Jordan survived an assassination attempt brought on because of his
62 prominent role in the civil rights movement;

63 WHEREAS, after leaving the Urban League, Mr. Jordan joined the Washington D.C.
64 offices of Dallas-based law firm Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld as a senior partner. He would
65 work in the D.C. office for the next 40 years;

66 WHEREAS, Mr. Jordan was a senior managing director at Lazard, an international
67 consulting and asset management firm, from 1999 until his passing;

68 WHEREAS, Mr. Jordan broke barriers as the only Black corporate board member at
69 several Fortune 500 companies such as American Express and Dow Jones;

70 WHEREAS, in his role as a corporate board member, Mr. Jordan advocated for the
71 advancement of persons of color in leadership positions which opened doors for Black CEOs;

72 WHEREAS, Mr. Jordan served as trusted counsel to foreign governments and Fortune
73 100 CEOs and boards;

74 WHEREAS, Mr. Jordan had served as an informal advisor to every president from
75 Lyndon B. Johnson to Barack Obama. He was a close friend and advisor to former President Bill
76 Clinton and served in an official capacity on President Clinton's transition team from 1992-1993.
77 Mr. Jordan also worked for John Kerry's presidential campaign in 2004;

78 WHEREAS, Mr. Jordan was a lifetime member of the Council on Foreign Relations;

79 WHEREAS, Mr. Jordan was an emeritus trustee at Howard University;

80 WHEREAS, Mr. Jordan collected over 80 honorary degrees from colleges and
81 universities across the United States;

82 WHEREAS, Mr. Jordan was awarded the Spingarn Medal by the NAACP in 2001, which
83 is the highest honor bestowed by the organization;

84 WHEREAS, Mr. Jordan was the recipient of the Lifetime Achievement Award from the
85 Anti-Defamation League;

86 WHEREAS, the Public Broadcasting System debuted a documentary of Mr. Jordan's life
87 in 2020, entitled *Make It Plain*, detailing his journey from segregated Atlanta to one of the most
88 distinguished Black leaders of his time;

89 WHEREAS, Mr. Jordan stayed faithful throughout his career to his role as an advocate
90 for civil rights and economic advancement for Black people;

91 WHEREAS, Mr. Jordan is survived by his wife Ann Jordan, a daughter, three step-
92 children, and nine grandchildren;

93 RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, that this
94 resolution may be cited as the "Vernon E. Jordan Jr. Posthumous Memorial Recognition
95 Resolution of 2021".

96 Sec. 2. The Council of the District of Columbia celebrates the remarkable life and legacy
97 of Mr. Vernon Jordan Jr. for his contributions to the civil rights movement, the legal profession,
98 and the Black community on the occasion of his death at 85 years of age.

99 Sec. 3. This resolution shall take effect immediately.