



Text File

Introduced: 5/5/2023

Bill No: 2023-1517, **Version:** 1

Committee: City Council

Status: Adopted

WHEREAS, James Gilmer was born in Pittsburgh, PA on April 17, 1993, with a vibrant world of space to explore in his gift of dance at his childhood home in Highland Park; and,

WHEREAS, James' love for the arts was fostered by a musically and artistically inclined family that enrolled him in ballet and tap-dancing classes at the Larry Cervi School of Performing Arts at the age of five; and,

WHEREAS, James Gilmer received a scholarship to attend the Pittsburgh Ballet Theater School (PBT) at the age of eight and went on to attend and train at the Pittsburgh Creative and Performing Arts School (CAPA) and where in 2009, he was chosen to dance for First Lady Michelle Obama at the G20 Summit; and,

WHEREAS, James performed with Texture Contemporary Ballet and joined Cincinnati Ballet in 2011 after graduation; and,

WHEREAS, James was promoted to Soloist in 2015 after dancing with the Cincinnati Ballet for six seasons, performing works by Victoria Morgan, Amy Seiwert, Septime Webre, Ohad Naharin, Val Caniparoli, Annabelle Lopez Ochoa, Edwaard Liang, Jennifer Archibald, and George Balanchine, among others; and,

WHEREAS, Mr. Gilmer joined Amy Seiwert's Imagery in 2013 and ODC Dance Company in 2017, performing works by Brenda Way, KT Nelson, and Kate Weare during the summer seasons; and,

WHEREAS, despite his great talent, James faced adversity as an African American dancer and his physical attributes in a field where many performers did not look or move like him; and,

WHEREAS, James joined the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater in 2019, fulfilling his childhood dream of joining the dance company touring both nationally and internationally with the company; and,

WHEREAS, in November of 2021, James performed in *Twyla Now*, and in October 2022 he performed in the *Upper Room* and *Nine Sinatra Songs* for New York City Center's celebration of legendary choreographer Twyla Tharp; and,

WHEREAS, James Gilmer will be performing as a member of the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater Company at the Benedum Center for the Performing Arts on May 9, 2023, featuring a mixed repertory program that includes contemporary works and the beloved signature work *Revelations*, a universal anthem of resilience that resounds anew more than 60 years after its premiere; and,

WHEREAS, James Gilmer is a proud son of the City of Pittsburgh and continues to honor our city through his talent and love of dance performance.

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NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Council of the City of Pittsburgh does hereby celebrate the outstanding talent of James A Gilmer; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Council of the City of Pittsburgh does hereby declare Tuesday, May 9, 2023, to be “James A Gilmer Day” in the City of Pittsburgh.