



Metropolitan Nashville and Davidson County, TN

Legislation Text

File #: RS2024-262, **Version:** 1

A resolution honoring the life of Nathaniel Harris.

WHEREAS, Nathaniel Ellis Harris, known to his friends as “Nate”, operated Woodcuts Gallery and Framing on Jefferson Street for over 35 years; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Harris was raised in North Nashville. His father, a contractor, passed away when he was eight years old, but passed along his love for entrepreneurship and woodworking to his son; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Harris attended Pearl High School and went on to graduate from Tennessee A& I State University, now Tennessee State University, with a degree in engineering; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Harris opened Woodcuts Gallery and Framing in 1987 as a framing shop, but also a gallery and museum to bring art to the community; and

WHEREAS, he intentionally located the business on Jefferson Street. Growing up, he remembered Jefferson Street as the home to a vibrant and thriving African American community in Nashville; and

WHEREAS, over the years, Mr. Harris spoke out about the longstanding, negative impacts of Interstate 40 on businesses and homeowners along Jefferson Street, as well as the surrounding neighborhood; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Harris purchased a building from Fisk University hoping to bring about revitalization to Jefferson Street and be part of future growth; and

WHEREAS, his plan worked. Woodcuts has become a successful business and a staple of North Nashville showcasing artists including Ludie Amos, Michael J. McBride, Gregory Ridley, Jamaal B. Sheats, and James Threalkill; and

WHEREAS, in March 2023, Woodcuts was honored with a historic marker at 1613 Jefferson Street in honor of its important place in Nashville’s history; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Harris was passionate about Jefferson Street’s success. He helped found and served as the first president of the Jefferson United Merchants Partnership (“J.U.M.P.”) which works to revitalize Jefferson Street area businesses through advocacy, education and public safety programs; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Harris is survived by his wife, Brenda Jones Harris, his daughters Tresa Jennings and Dionne Harris, and grandchildren Isaiah Nathaniel Harris and Addison Grace Jennings; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting and proper that the Metropolitan Council recognize the life of Nathaniel Harris and his contributions to Jefferson Street and to Nashville and Davidson County.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE METROPOLITAN GOVERNMENT OF NASHVILLE AND DAVIDSON COUNTY:

Section 1. That the Metropolitan County Council hereby goes on record as honoring the life and legacy of Mr. Nathaniel Ellis Harris.

Section 2. This Resolution shall take effect from and after its adoption, the welfare of The Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County requiring it.