

Proclamation



WHEREAS, Felker William Ward, Jr. is a distinguished leader whose remarkable journey began in humble surroundings in Atlanta, Georgia; he accelerated his education, completing David T. Howard and Booker T. Washington High School in just three years before enrolling at Tuskegee Institute, where he majored in Commercial Industries and minored in Architecture; and



WHEREAS, Felker enlisted in the United States Army, where he served for 21 years, was a decorated two tour Vietnam War combat helicopter pilot and Public Relations Officer, ultimately retiring with the rank of Lieutenant Colonel; upon his return to Atlanta from a second tour in Vietnam, Felker took the LSAT and was accepted to Emory School of Law in September 1967; and



WHEREAS, in the late 1960s and early 1970s, Felker and his late wife, Mary, established Oriental Kitchen, a Chinese carry-out restaurant in Atlanta, and later acquired three Burger King franchises in the city of Atlanta; Felker, along with partners Herman J. Russell and Jesse Hill, Jr., launched Concessions International, with operations at major airports across the country, and today he holds a minority interest and is an advisor to two small airport concessions firms that he co-founded with his son, Felker Ward, III; and



WHEREAS, in 1987, Governor Joe Frank Harris appointed Felker to chair the Georgia Human Relations Commission, and he represented several black families in Forsyth, helping them re-acquire family land that had been taken from them illegally; he also served for 17 years on the board of the Georgia Department of Natural Resources where he was instrumental in bringing Canadian Geese to Georgia; and



WHEREAS, Felker's firm, Ward & Associates Investment Bankers, played a pivotal role in revitalizing the Lakewood Fairgrounds, and keeping Fort McPherson and Fort Gillem Army bases operational; following their closure in 2007, he was tasked with exploring redevelopment opportunities for Fort McPherson, and in 2015, he was appointed by Governor Sonny Perdue to chair the Military Installation Redevelopment Authority (MILRA), and under his guidance, he brokered a significant deal allowing the development of Tyler Perry Studios; and



WHEREAS, Felker enjoys spending quality time with his four children: Felecia, Felker, III, Franklin, and Michael, his grandchildren, and extended family and friends;



NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Fulton County Board of Commissioners recognizes Felker William Ward, Jr. for his enduring legacy of service and leadership that continues to impact the community and beyond, and does hereby proclaim Monday, March 3, 2025, as "**FELKER WILLIAM WARD, JR. APPRECIATION DAY**" in Fulton County, Georgia.

Fulton County Board of Commissioners

Commissioner

Attest:

Clerk to the Commission

F U L T O N C O U N T Y