

DENVER CITY COUNCIL



Proclamation No. 25-1533

Honoring the lives and careers of FBI Special Agents Roy Moore and Donald Sebesta

WHEREAS, on November 1, 1955, a Colorado man placed 25 sticks of dynamite aboard United Airlines Flight 629, which departed Denver's Stapleton Airfield enroute to Portland, Oregon. The bomb detonated eight miles east of Longmont killing 39 passengers and 5 crew members; and

WHEREAS, this unprecedented tragedy resulted in numerous changes in airline safety, investigative techniques, and courtroom protocols; and

WHEREAS, due to the suspicious nature of the incident, the Federal Bureau of Investigation was actively engaged in this tragedy at the earliest stages. Initially, the Bureau supported the Denver Police Department with victim identification and later with identifying the perpetrator of this heinous act of mass murder; and

WHEREAS, FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover selected Special Agents Roy K. Moore and Donald Sebesta to lead the Denver FBI Field Office's investigative efforts into this crime; and

WHEREAS, Special Agent Moore was born on June 11, 1914, in Hood River, Oregon. Agent Moore was dedicated to a life of service, having enlisted in the United States Marine Corp following high school graduation, and was stationed at Quantico, Virginia; and

WHEREAS, in 1935 Agent Moore became a firearms instructor for newly hired FBI agents, which ultimately led to him pursuing a career as a special agent for the FBI and in 1955 he and Special Agent Sebesta helped identify and get a confession from the perpetrator of the bombing of United 629; and

WHEREAS, in 1964 Agent More was handpicked by Director Hoover to oversee most of the notorious civil rights killings, including those depicted in the movie, *Mississippi Burning*, and is credited with establishing the first FBI Bureau Office in the state of Mississippi, effectively declaring war on the Klu Klux Klan; and

WHEREAS, Agent Moore retired from the FBI in 1974 and provided security for the Deposit Guarantee National Bank and on October 12, 2008, he passed away due to complications from pneumonia; and

WHEREAS, Special Agent Donald Sebesta was born in Callaway, Minnesota in 1922 to James and Mary Sebesta and was also drawn to a life of public service, enlisting in the Naval Reserve in September of 1942 at the age of 20. He was commissioned as an ensign and educated in naval aviation; and

WHEREAS, following his release from active duty in 1945, Agent Sebesta continued his service as a pilot instructor in the Organized Flight Reserves and in 1949 he earned a law degree from John Marshall Law School and was later admitted to the Iowa Bar Association; and

WHEREAS, in 1951 Agent Sebesta accepted a position with the FBI as a special agent, serving first in the Houston Field Office and later the Denver Field Office and his experience as a naval aviator provided him with unique insights needed for the investigation of the bombing of United Flight 629 and resulted in his expert testimony at the trial; and

WHEREAS, Agent Sebesta played important roles in a number of high-profile cases, including the 1960 kidnapping and murder of Adolph Coors III, and resulted in him serving as the primary media spokesman for the Denver FBI Field Office; and

WHEREAS, Agent Sebesta retired from the FBI following 25 years of distinguished service and upon retirement he was able to enjoy his true passions for playing the piano, and outdoor activities like gardening and mountain excursions; and

WHEREAS, Special Agent Sebesta passed away at age 58 in 1980.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT PROCLAIMED BY THE DENVER CITY COUNCIL:

Section 1. That the Denver City Council recognizes the service and investigative prowess of both Special Agents Moore and Sebesta and acknowledges their outstanding service to the citizens of our country and for their efforts to ensure justice for the victims of United Flight 629.

Section 2. That the Clerk and Recorder of the City and County of Denver shall affix the seal of the City and County of Denver to this proclamation and that a copy be transmitted to be transmitted to the Denver Field Office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the families of Agents Moore and Sebesta, the Denver Police Museum, the Society of Former Special Agents of the FBI, the FBI Denver Citizens Academy Alumni Association, and the FBI Experience in Washington, D.C.

PASSED BY THE COUNCIL October 14, 2025

PRESIDENT

