

DENVER CITY COUNCIL



Proclamation No. 25-0208 Honoring Retired Denver Police Detective Robert Simmons

WHEREAS, in 1880, a group of Black civic leaders attended a Denver City Council meeting and demanded the Denver Police Department and Denver Fire Department begin hiring Black officers and firefighters; and

WHEREAS, on April 15, 1880, then Denver Mayor Richard Sopris swore-in Isaac Brown as Denver's first Black Denver Police officer, who served the department for ten years, paving the way for generations of Black officers to have served the people of the City and County of Denver; and

WHEREAS, among those in that legacy of service is Robert "Bobby" Simmons, who was born in Iona November 26, 1947, in Inverness, Mississippi, as the youngest of 11 children (five sisters and six brothers) to Arthur and Mary Simmons. Bobby's father was the son of slaves, a sharecropper, and a minister in the small community; and

WHEREAS, Bobby attended elementary school in Moorhead, Mississippi and began his high school education in Indianola, Mississippi, at Gentry High School; and

WHEREAS, Arthur Simmons passed away which resulted in Mary Simmons moving the family to Denver in 1965 to be closer to family; and

WHEREAS, Bobby continued his high school education at Manual High School, graduating in 1967. Bobby played an important role supporting the family working part time during high school and later full time at the Ace Supermarket at 22nd and Marion; and

WHEREAS, Bobby became aware of a special Denver Police recruitment program aimed at helping Denver hire more Black officers. He received much encouragement from Denver Police Officer Bill Sailors. Participation in this program, required him to work during the day and study at night and resulted in him joining the 1971 Denver Police Academy; and

WHEREAS, after successfully completing the police academy, Patrolman Simmons began his career in District 3 with his training Officers Al Mitterer and Bill Spickard who both had a tremendous influence on Bobby. Later Officer Simmons was transferred to District 2; and

WHEREAS, on March 11, 1973, Officer Simmons responded to an alarm at the Safeway store located at 6th and Corona. Arriving first on the scene he witnessed armed gunmen attempt to take two store employees hostage. Officer Simmons exchanged gunfire with the suspects and ultimately subdued them with the assistance of additional officers. Officer Simmons did receive a minor gunshot wound, and was later awarded the Medal of Honor for his bravery by the Denver Police Department; and

WHEREAS, on the election of Mayor Federico Peña, Bobby was assigned to protect the very athletic and young new mayor of Denver, who ran early every morning. This security team participated in the New York Marathon and other major city's marathons, as a result. Bobby was a natural athlete himself and competed in the Police Olympics and other law enforcement athletic activities; and

WHEREAS, Bobby had a very significant 34-year career serving as a patrolman, a member of the SCAT team, High Crime Burglary Unit, Vice Narcotics, Organized Crime Strike Force, Organized Crime Unit, Intelligence Bureau, Metro Agencies Front Range Task Force; and

WHEREAS, in 2005, the Denver Nuggets approached Bobby about setting up team security which he successfully led. This allowed him to travel with the team throughout the United States, Europe and Australia; and



WHEREAS, Bobby and his wife, Karen who he married in 1979, have a family of four beautiful daughters, and in his retirement, he and Karen have traveled and continue to enjoy their family.

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

Section 1. That the Denver City Council recognizes and acknowledges the outstanding service that Detective Simmons provided to our community.

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 copies be transmitted to the Simmons family, the Denver Police Museum and the Denver Police Department.

PASSED BY THE COUNCIL DATE February 18, 2025

PRESIDENT

