



Proclamation No. 23-0601

Commending the O'Neill family for 76 years of continuous service to the Denver Police Dept.

WHEREAS, President John F. Kennedy issued an Executive Order in 1961 declaring the week of May 15 National Police Week; and

WHEREAS, during the 164-year history of the Denver Police Department more than 9,000 officers have served our city. Those officers have played an essential role in safeguarding the rights, freedoms and the safety of our community; and

WHEREAS, the Denver Police Museum has undertaken its Legacy Program to honor the many multi-generational families who have served as Denver Police Officers with special recognition this year to the O'Neill family; and

WHEREAS, the O'Neill's family service began on May 1, 1947 with the career of Denver Police Officer Thomas O'Neill. Officer O'Neill had a very distinguished career serving as a detective, sergeant, later as a division chief under Chief Arthur Dill and as president of the Denver Police Protective Association. His reputation for honesty and integrity was so widely admired that he was appointed in the 1960s as a key investigator of the Denver Police Burglary Scandal. O'Neill played a key role in re-establishing the community's faith in the department before retiring in 1972. Officer O'Neill married his wife Alice and they had two boys who both became Denver Police Officers Michael and Thomas O'Neill Jr; and

WHEREAS, Michael O'Neill served on the Denver Police Department from 1967 to 2004. Officer Michael O'Neill served in a wide variety of assignments throughout his career. He married Officer Suzie O'Neill who was an early female officer serving in the juvenile division from 1970 to 1973. Michael began his career in District 2 as a patrol officer and concluded it as the commander in 2004. His service was so highly regarded that the Community Room at District 2 was named in his honor; and

WHEREAS, Thomas O'Neill Jr. served the Denver Police Department from 1971 to 2004. Officer Thomas O'Neill served with distinction in District 3, Traffic and Metro K-9. He also served honorably as a member of the United States Navy prior to joining the department; and

WHEREAS, the next generation of the O'Neill family continues to serve the citizens of Denver. Michael O'Neill Jr. is a sergeant in District 4. Bryan O'Neill serves as a sergeant in District 3 and as the vice president of the Denver Police Protective Association. Melissa O'Neill-Varela and her husband Sam also continue the family tradition with long distinguished careers with the Castle Rock Police Department.

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

Section 1. That the Council of the City and County of Denver recognizes the week of May 15 as National Police Week and in honor of this week, commends the O'Neill family for its 76 years of continuous service to the people of Denver.

Section 2. That the Clerk 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 the O'Neill family.

PASSED BY THE COUNCIL May 15, 2023

COUNCIL PRESIDENT