

MOTION

The legacy and impact of John Lewis presents several lessons in our work to reimagine a more equitable Los Angeles. From student activist to elder statesman, longtime Congressman John R. Lewis continuously led the charge for racial and social equity. For more than three decades, he encouraged our nation's youth "to get into good trouble" and he modeled how to achieve it.

As the son of sharecroppers and a student of nonviolence, his personal history parallels that of the civil rights movement. At the age of 16, John Lewis applied for a library card from the local Pike County Library in Troy, Alabama, but was refused because of his race. Sadly, he never returned to Pike County library until 40 years later, in 1998, for his own book signing, *Walking in the Wind: A Memoir of the Movement*.

A disciple and colleague of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., he was among the original 13 Freedom Riders who challenged segregated interstate travel in the South in 1961. As the founder and early leader of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, he was on the frontlines of the "Bloody Sunday" voting rights protest in Selma, Alabama. He also coordinated lunch counter sit-ins, many times against the blows of angry mobs and violent attacks, challenging racial segregation and other indignities of second-class citizenship.

More than a half century later, after the killing of George Floyd and countless other victims, barriers still remain in our fight to achieve equity. Racism, police brutality and inequality continue to disadvantage to African Americans and other ethnic groups, preventing communities of color from achieving their full potential.

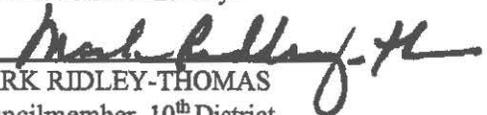
In the wake of the deep civil unrest that gripped our nation in the Summer of 2020, Meg DeLoatch, creator and executive producer, and her fellow writers for the Netflix show, *Family Reunion*, began sharing these painful stories related to racial profiling and other difficult topics. Many of the story lines in *Family Reunion*, now in its second season, seek to recognize and share the diverse, multi-generational histories of Black lives.

In remembrance of the late Representative John Lewis, a painting of the Congressman, as seen in the Black Lives Matter Plaza, in Washington, DC, will be featured in forthcoming episodes. The painting marks one of his last public appearances before his death, amid nationwide protests over the death of George Floyd.

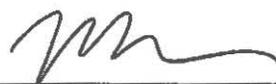
In commemoration of his leadership and advocacy, the Netflix has proposed donating the painting that will be featured in the show to the Los Angeles Public Library.

Representative John Lewis' remarkable life journey is a salient reminder for us all to remain committed and resilient in the push for change. His life offers important lessons for contemporary generations on how to confront racial violence and transform American democracy. To honor his legacy, we must all continue to "get in good trouble, necessary trouble, and redeem the soul of America". The opportunity to view his portrait at the Los Angeles Central Library will be a notable reminder of his life and work.

I THEREFORE MOVE that the Los Angeles Public Library be authorized to accept the gift by Netflix of a painting of Congressman John Lewis, and to thank the donor on behalf of the City.

PRESENTED BY: 

MARK RIDLEY-THOMAS
Councilmember, 10th District

SECONDED BY: 

MARQUEECE HARRIS-DAWSON
Councilmember, 8th District

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