

In Memoriam



Bob Buckhorn, Mayor

WHEREAS, the City of Tampa takes pride in recognizing those individuals whose commitment and dedication have made a lasting impact on our community and its citizens. One of these individuals was Sam Melville Gibbons, one of Tampa's most beloved citizens and well-known politician, who passed away on Wednesday, October 10, 2012 at age 92; and

WHEREAS, a Tampa, Florida native, Sam Gibbons was born on January 20, 1920, graduated from Plant High School and attended the University of Tampa where he joined the ROTC, leading to a commission in the United States Army serving as Captain with the 101st Airborne Division during World War II and parachuted into enemy-occupied France on D-Day, June 6, 1944. His military service prompted news anchor and television journalist Tom Brokaw's best-selling book *The Greatest Generation* published in 1998; and among his many medals, he received the Bronze Star for Valor and the French Legion of Honor. Upon his discharge from the Army as a Major, Sam Gibbons returned to Tampa, earned his Law Degree from the University of Florida in Gainesville, and was admitted to the Florida Bar in 1947; and

WHEREAS, Congressman Sam Gibbons began his illustrious political career in Washington, D.C. during the Kennedy Administration in 1962, serving 17 terms in the United States House of Representatives, never losing an election, and rose to serve as Chair of the House Ways and Means Committee. Known as a man of integrity, conviction and passion, he championed for social programs, health care, education, world trade, civil rights, and he was a prominent and influential member of Congress, well respected by his peers and loved by his constituents; and

WHEREAS, during his political career, Congressman Gibbons was credited with many accomplishments including advocating for the U.S.-Canada Free Trade Agreement and the North American Free Trade Agreement, initiating the nation's Head Start Program with the first one established in Tampa, Florida, the Southwest Florida Water Management District, Interstate 4, winning support for the building of the James A. Haley Veterans' Hospital, and played a critical role in the development of Tampa International Airport, Hillsborough Community College, the Interstate 75 By-Pass, fought for MacDill Air Force Base to remain a part of Tampa Bay and he is credited with being the "father" of the University of South Florida, one of his most signature accomplishments; and

WHEREAS, among the many richly deserved honors bestowed to Congressman Gibbons include the **Sam M. Gibbons United States Courthouse** located in downtown Tampa and the **Gibbons Alumni Center** at the University of South Florida being named in his honor, and in 2007 he received the League of Women Voters' **Lifetime Achievement Award**; and

WHEREAS, with all that Sam Gibbons accomplished for the Tampa Bay area and his lifetime of commitment, our city would not be the vibrant and world-class city it is today, and although we are grieved at the loss of this outstanding citizen, his legacy will continue to live on through the improvements he brought to our community, and in all those who lives he has touched.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Bob Buckhorn, by the virtue of the authority vested in me as Mayor of the City of Tampa, Florida, do hereby urge all citizens to join me in publicly expressing sorrow and heartfelt appreciation to the Sam Gibbons Family, his wife Betty, sons Clifford, Mark, and Timothy, and seven Grandchildren, and to express our hopes that they will take solace in their cherished memories and the impact of his life on our city, in our state and in our nation.

Dated this 12th day of October, 2012.



Mayor

