

WHEREAS, Lieutenant Colonel Leo Gray enlisted in the Army Air Corps in 1943 at the age of 18, and served 41 years in the military; and

WHEREAS, in 1943 the military was segregated, and Lieutenant Colonel Gray was a member of the original Tuskegee Airman, the first African-American military fighter and bomber pilots who fought in World War II, and he flew 15 combat missions in P-51 Mustangs over Europe protecting Allied bombers; and

WHEREAS, while serving in the military Lieutenant Colonel Gray obtained his bachelor's degree from the University of Massachusetts, Master's degree from the University of Nebraska, and completed post-graduate work at the University of Maryland while working as an agricultural economist with the USDA's Economic Research Service. He also worked as Director of Planning and Evaluation with the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, and was a Director in the Program Planning Office of the Food Quality & Inspection Service; and

WHEREAS, Lieutenant Colonel Gray is the past President, Vice-President, and Treasurer of the East Coast Chapter of Tuskegee Airmen; founder and President of the Miami Chapter of the Tuskegee Airmen; founder and past president of the Forum on Blacks in Agriculture; President of the Broward County Chapter Two of the Reserve Officers Association; and a member of the Air Force Association, Military Officer's Association of America, Quiet Birdmen, Experimental Aviation Association, Air Force Association, NAACP, and many other organizations; and

WHEREAS, Lieutenant Colonel Gray was awarded the Congressional Gold Medal in 2007 as one of the 355 Red Tail Pilots of the Tuskegee Airmen who were honored for their heroism in escorting American bombers in raids over Europe and North Africa, and has been included in several documentary films pertaining to the Red Tail pilots. He was also awarded the Oak Leaf Cluster and the Presidential Unit Citation; and

WHEREAS, Lieutenant Colonel Gray is dedicated to inspiring aviation careers, particularly for minority youth. He has spent his retirement promoting aviation to high school students, veterans, and members of the community; and he volunteers to take children from underserved communities, as well as those with disabilities, on flights they otherwise would not have the opportunity to experience; and

WHEREAS, Lieutenant Colonel Gray was inducted this year into the Broward County Senior Hall of Fame for his outstanding community service.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City Commission of the City of Coconut Creek, Florida, hereby proclaims Friday, July 24, 2015, as

“LIEUTENANT COLONEL (RET.) LEO GRAY DAY”

in the City of Coconut Creek in honor of Lieutenant Colonel Gray's military service and his contributions to both the students of Broward County and the community of Coconut Creek.

**IN WITNESS WHEREOF, we have hereunto
set our hands and caused the seal of the
City of Coconut Creek to be affixed
this 23rd day of July 2015**