

Senate Resolution 62

By: Senators Jackson of the 2nd, Jones of the 10th, Harbison of the 15th and
Rahman of the 5th

ADOPTED SENATE

A RESOLUTION

1 Recognizing the life and legacy of United States Olympian Tommie Smith for his
2 achievements as an athlete, scholar, and civil rights icon, as well as his impact during the
3 1968 Summer Olympic Games, setting the world record for the 200 meter sprint; and for
4 other purposes.

5 WHEREAS, United States athlete Tommie Smith won the 200 meter track and field race
6 with a then world-record time of 19.83 seconds in the 1968 Summer Olympic Games, the
7 first time that someone broke the under-20 second mark, making him the fastest man on earth
8 in 1968; and

9 WHEREAS, Mr. Smith received his medal shoeless, but wearing black socks, to represent
10 Black poverty; and

11 WHEREAS, Mr. Smith wore a black scarf around his neck to represent Black pride and an
12 Olympic Project for Human Rights badge; and

13 WHEREAS, upon receiving his medal, while on the podium during the playing of the United
14 States national anthem, Mr. Smith raised a black-gloved fist in salute of human rights and
15 Black self-determination; and

16 WHEREAS, the civil rights movement of Mr. Smith is one of the most iconic in sports
17 history and served its purpose of bringing attention to the plights of others and serving as a
18 model for later generations in using their sports and other platforms to inspire social change;
19 and

20 WHEREAS, Mr. Smith would oppose the idea imposed by the Olympic Project for Human
21 Rights to protest the Olympic Games, as Mr. Smith believed that it was pivotal to represent
22 his country on the highest and largest stage; and

23 WHEREAS, Mr. Smith, a Georgian, has continued his work in improving the lives of
24 Georgians and in communities across this nation in the years since 1968; and

25 WHEREAS, Mr. Smith was a stellar athlete, civil rights activist, and scholar; and

26 WHEREAS, Mr. Smith went on to become a wide receiver for the Cincinnati Bengals of the
27 National Football League; and

28 WHEREAS, Mr. Smith is the author of his autobiography "Silent Gesture"; and

29 WHEREAS, Mr. Smith eventually became a track coach at Oberlin College, where he taught
30 sociology and later taught physical education at Santa Monica College until 2005.

31 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE that Tommie Smith is
32 recognized for his movement for human rights during the 1968 Summer Olympic Games.

33 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Secretary of the Senate is authorized and directed
34 to make appropriate copies of this resolution available for distribution to Mr. Tommie Smith,
35 the public, and the press.