

PROCLAMATION
Celebrating The Den of the Mellow Men & Bo's Historic Gridiron Sons

WHEREAS, the two-story house at 1345 Geddes Avenue was where seven Black football players, the largest collection of Black athletes ever at the school on scholarship, made their home from 1970 to 1972, dubbing it The Den of the Mellow Men; and

WHEREAS, the seven Black athletes, William "Billy" Taylor (RB), Glenn Doughty (RB/WR), Thomas Darden (DB), Reggie McKenzie (G), Michael Oldham (WR), Michael Taylor (LB), and Alden "Butch" Carpenter (DE), arrived in Ann Arbor to play football in the fall of 1968, and they were soon branding themselves The Mellow Men; and

WHEREAS, in 1969, The Mellow Men were starters in Bo Schembechler's first season as head coach. The team defeated the unbeatable Ohio State Buckeyes, 24-12, winning the Big Ten Championship and a trip to the Rose Bowl. The team's victory began college football's greatest rivalry and the famous "10-Year War" between Michigan and Ohio State; and

WHEREAS, in 1970, during the Vietnam War, two of The Mellow Men, Billy Taylor and Glenn Doughty, were the first athletes in the country selected by the NCAA and the United States Armed Forces to be All-Americans. The athletes traveled by helicopter across Vietnam to visit American bases and troops; and

WHEREAS, in 1971, The Mellow Men led Michigan to its third undefeated season, 11-0, beating Ohio State for their second Big Ten Championship. Billy Taylor, the team MVP, scored a historic touchdown with less than 3 minutes remaining. After the team defeated Ohio State, students tore down the goal post and placed it on the front yard of The Den of the Mellow Men; and

WHEREAS, Brian Williams, Assistant Director and Archivist for University History at the University of Michigan Bentley Historical Library said, "In the long history of Michigan football, no other class of scholarship athletes living together in a single house in Ann Arbor has represented Michigan's winning culture like the seven 'Mellow Men' of the famous 'Den.' From student-athletes engaged in activism to playing in the NFL and subsequent philanthropic work, the former occupants of the 'Den' have left an enduring legacy for more than half a century."

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Christopher Taylor, Mayor of Ann Arbor, Michigan, do hereby recognize and thank The Mellow Men for their contributions to the Ann Arbor community and beyond. I encourage all community members to visit The Den of the Mellow Men.



*I hereby set my hand and seal
this 25th day of April 2025*

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Christopher Taylor".

Christopher Taylor
Mayor of the City of Ann Arbor