

Resolution of Commendation
Edmond Edward Wysinger

WHEREAS, in recognition of a courageous man, a minority member of our community, who played an integral role in Visalia's history. He stood for something we all believe in, which is the best education and opportunity for our children. His case represents a significant turning point in the desegregation of schools in California and eventually the United States of America; and

WHEREAS, Edmond Edward Wysinger was born into South Carolina slavery in 1816 to a Cherokee father and an African American mother. After over 30 years of slavery, he followed his master to work in the California gold fields. On October 30, 1854, he earned enough money to buy his freedom. He then migrated to central California where he married and raised 8 children. Eventually, he and his family settled in Tulare County in a town called Visalia; and

WHEREAS, When his son, Arthur, was 12 years old, Mr. Wysinger took him to be enrolled in the "White School" in Visalia. The schoolmaster denied his request and told Mr. Wysinger to take his son to the "Colored School" outside of town. Mr. Wysinger challenged the right for his son to attend the Visalia School and lost in Tulare County Superior Court. He fought that decision and on January 29, 1890, he won his case in the California Supreme Court and his son, Arthur, was able to attend the Visalia School. Mr. Wysinger's victory helped end school segregation for blacks in California.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council does hereby recognize the significant contribution of Edmond Edward Wysinger in paving the way for black students in Visalia and all over the United States to attend non-segregated schools, thus receiving an equal chance at a quality education.

Dated: February 7, 2022


Steve Nelsen, Mayor


Brian Poochigian, Vice Mayor


Brett Taylor, Councilmember


Greg Collins, Councilmember


Liz Wynn, Councilmember