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KHALIF J. RAINEY
ALDERMAN, 7TH DISTRICT



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On the passing of Cicely Tyson

Statement of Alderman Khalif J. Rainey January 29, 2021

Our nation lost a true legend of stage and screen when actress Cicely Tyson passed yesterday at the age of 96. She was a trailblazer who paved the way for generations of African American actors and actresses.

Cicely Tyson's choice of film and television roles helped shatter Hollywood's African American stereotypes throughout the 1970s, as she insisted on playing characters that allowed her to radiate strength and dignity. Ms. Tyson starred in many important films, including the acclaimed "*Souther*" in 1972, which garnered a broad range of award-season nods, including an Oscar nomination for Tyson, at the time making her only the third black actress to be nominated for an Academy Award.

She starred in several other successful movies and TV shows including "*Roots*" (1977), "*King*" (1978), and the movie "*Oldest Living Confederate Widow Tells All*" (1991) in which she earned her third Emmy for outstanding supporting actress.

In 2016, President Barack Obama fittingly presented Ms. Tyson with the Presidential Medal of Freedom during a ceremony at the White House.

I want to say 'Thank You' to Ms. Tyson for allowing Black actresses and actors – and Black children – to see that they too could strive for excellence and inspiration in film and theatre.

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