

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 39

BY SENATOR BOUDREAUX AND REPRESENTATIVE DUSTIN MILLER

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To express the sincere and heartfelt condolences of the Legislature of Louisiana upon the passing of Ambassador James Alfred Joseph.

WHEREAS, James A. Joseph, beloved husband, father, grandfather, and public servant was born on March 12, 1935, in Plaisance and grew up in Opelousas, Louisiana; and

WHEREAS, Ambassador Joseph lived an inspirational American life dedicated to service, faith, and the fight for equality and social justice; and

WHEREAS, Ambassador Joseph rose to the heights of achievement and contributions in academia, public service, civil society, and the private sector; and

WHEREAS, Ambassador Joseph served in senior executive or advisory positions for four U.S. Presidents, including presidents Carter, Clinton, Reagan, and H.W. Bush; and

WHEREAS, Ambassador Joseph was the only U.S. Ambassador to present his credentials to President Nelson Mandela, and was awarded the Order of Good Hope by the Republic of South Africa in 1999, their highest honor bestowed on a citizen of another country; and

WHEREAS, Ambassador Joseph served as President and Chief Executive Officer of the Council on Foundations, an international organization of more than 2,000 foundations and corporate giving programs, which changed communities and lives on five continents; and

WHEREAS, Ambassador Joseph served as Vice President of Cummins Engine Company, the world's largest producer of heavy-duty diesel engines where he was a pioneer in corporate social responsibility; and

WHEREAS, as an ordained minister, Ambassador Joseph taught at Yale Divinity School and the Claremont Colleges where he also was University Chaplain and led student protests against the war in Vietnam; and

WHEREAS, Ambassador Joseph was professor emeritus of the practice of public

policy at the Sanford School of Public Policy at Duke University and founder of the United States-Southern Africa Center for Leadership and Public Values, a joint endeavor between Duke University and the University of Cape Town; and

WHEREAS, Ambassador Joseph graduated from Southern University in 1956 and obtained a master's degree from Yale Divinity School in 1963; and

WHEREAS, after hurricanes Rita and Katrina decimated south Louisiana, Governor Kathleen Blanco named him Chair of the Board of Directors of the Foundation for Louisiana (formerly the Louisiana Disaster Recovery Foundation); and

WHEREAS, he was honored as a Louisiana Legend in 2006, was inducted into the Louisiana Political Hall of Fame in 2008, and is a member of the Opelousas Hall of Fame; and

WHEREAS, Ambassador Joseph authored four books: *The Charitable Impulse*; *Remaking-America*; *Leadership as a Way of Being*; and *Saved for a Purpose: A Journey from Private Virtues to Public Values*; and

WHEREAS, Ambassador Joseph is the recipient of nineteen honorary degrees and a member of the Alpha Phi Alpha fraternity and Sigma Pi Phi; and

WHEREAS, Ambassador Joseph is mourned by his loving wife, the former Mary Braxton of Sarasota, Florida - an Emmy Award winning television journalist; his son Jeffery and daughter-in-law Lisa Merman; daughter Denise, and his beloved nieces and nephews; and

WHEREAS, he was preceded in death by his parents Adam and Julia Joseph, as well as Doris Taylor Joseph, his wife of 33 years, and his brother John who was elected as the first Black mayor of Opelousas, Louisiana, in 1986; and

WHEREAS, a memorial service was held for Ambassador Joseph at the National Cathedral in Washington, D.C. on April 25, 2023; and

WHEREAS, it is with great sadness that the passing of Ambassador James A. Joseph, beloved husband, father, grandfather, and public servant is acknowledged.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby express sincere and heartfelt condolences to the family of Ambassador James Alfred Joseph upon the occasion of his passing, a great loss to the state and citizens of Louisiana.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to his wife, Mary Braxton and his children, Jeffery and Denise.

---

PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

---

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES