

2015 Regular Session

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 50

BY REPRESENTATIVE JAMES

CONDOLENCES: Expresses condolences upon the death of Reverend Doctor Gardner Calvin Taylor

1 A RESOLUTION

2 To express the condolences of the House of Representatives upon the death of the Reverend
3 Doctor Gardner Calvin Taylor.

4 WHEREAS, the Lord God Almighty reassigned a spiritual general in His Army, the
5 Reverend Doctor Gardner Calvin Taylor, from Earth to eternal rest, fittingly on Resurrection
6 Sunday, April 5, 2015, at the age of ninety-six; and

7 WHEREAS, born to Washington Monroe Taylor and Selina Taylor in Baton Rouge
8 on June 18, 1918, Gardner C. Taylor was baptized into the fellowship of Mount Zion First
9 Baptist Church, pastored by his father, and where he also served as pastor from 1943-1947;
10 and

11 WHEREAS, a 1937 Leland College graduate, Gardner C. Taylor was granted a
12 bachelor of divinity degree at the Oberlin School of Theology and was awarded fifteen
13 honorary doctorate degrees throughout his ministry; in 1948, Dr. Taylor was called to pastor
14 The Concord Baptist Church of Christ in the Bedford-Stuyvesant neighborhood of Brooklyn,
15 New York, where he served the eight thousand member congregation, now numbering ten
16 thousand members, for forty-two years until his retirement in 1990; and

17 WHEREAS, under his leadership, The Concord Baptist Church of Christ established
18 a credit union to provide loans denied to blacks by commercial banks; the church also
19 established a one hundred twenty-one bed nursing home, a center for the elderly, and an
20 elementary school; Dr. Taylor was termed "the dean of black preachers in America" by *Time*
21 magazine in 1980; and

1 WHEREAS, Dr. Taylor not only espoused the Word of God, he was a mentor and
2 close friend of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and a prominent figure in civil rights in the
3 1960s; and

4 WHEREAS, in 1961, Dr. Taylor and Dr. King separated from the National Baptist
5 Convention, U.S.A., the nation's largest black Christian denomination, and founded the
6 Progressive National Baptist Convention, which was and continues to be committed to social
7 justice, desegregation, and affirmative action; Dr. Taylor served as its president from 1967
8 to 1969; and

9 WHEREAS, although arrested three times during civil rights protests in the 1960s,
10 Dr. Taylor was best known for his quiet, effective activism: he was a director of the Urban
11 League of Greater New York, a member of the New York City Commission on Intergroup
12 Relations, and a leader in the Kings County Democratic organization; and

13 WHEREAS, his resounding timbre and the wisdom expressed in his sermons earned
14 Dr. Taylor the privilege of lecturing and preaching in South Africa, Zambia, Malawi,
15 Denmark, England, Scotland, Australia, China, and Japan and at universities and churches
16 throughout the United States; he also preached the pre-inaugural sermon for President
17 William Jefferson Clinton in 1993; President Clinton awarded Dr. Taylor the nation's highest
18 civilian honor, the Presidential Medal of Freedom, in 2000; and

19 WHEREAS, more than two thousand of Dr. Taylor's sermons have been archived at
20 the Robert W. Woodruff Library in Atlanta, many of which are included in a collection of
21 his sermons in the tome, *The Words of Gardner Taylor: 50 Years of Timeless Treasures*; and

22 WHEREAS, the conclusion of the life of Dr. Taylor is aptly described in the holy
23 book upon which he founded his faith, in II Timothy 4:7: "I have fought a good fight, I have
24 finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of
25 righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me
26 only, but unto all them also that love his appearing".

27 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the House of Representatives of the
28 Legislature of Louisiana does hereby express deepest condolences to the family, friends, and
29 former congregations of the Reverend Doctor Gardner Calvin Taylor upon his passing; does
30 hereby extend sincerest sympathies to those whose lives were touched and transformed by

1 this man of God, powerful in word and deed; and do hereby offer prayers and hopes for
2 comfort in the knowledge that Dr. Taylor's close, personal relationship with his Savior and
3 Lord brings full truth to John 11:25: "I am the resurrection and the life: the one that believes
4 in me, though dead, shall live again".

5 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a suitable copy of this Resolution be transmitted
6 to the family of Rev. Dr. Gardner C. Taylor.

DIGEST

The digest printed below was prepared by House Legislative Services. It constitutes no part of the legislative instrument. The keyword, one-liner, abstract, and digest do not constitute part of the law or proof or indicia of legislative intent. [R.S. 1:13(B) and 24:177(E)]

HR 50 Original

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Expresses condolences upon the death of Rev. Dr. Gardner C. Taylor.