

2021 Regular Session

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 80

BY SENATOR FIELDS

COMMENDATIONS. Commends Mr. Johnnie A. Jones Sr. for his legendary accomplishments as a decorated veteran of WWII and a civil rights leader.

1 A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

2 To commend Mr. Johnnie A. Jones Sr. for his legendary accomplishments as a decorated
3 veteran of World War II and a civil rights pioneer.

4 WHEREAS, Mr. Johnnie A. Jones Sr., a Louisiana native and son of lease croppers,
5 was born in Laurel Hill on November 30, 1919, and began his high school education at
6 Southern University Demonstration School (now known as Southern Lab); and

7 WHEREAS, Mr. Jones then attended Southern University in Baton Rouge until he
8 was drafted into the United States Army to serve in World War II, and he became the first
9 African-American soldier to be named a warrant officer in the U.S. Army; and

10 WHEREAS, Mr. Jones survived the Battle of the Bulge, the largest battle ever fought
11 by the U.S. Army and a major factor in bringing about the end of WWII; and

12 WHEREAS, upon returning to Louisiana after WWII, Mr. Jones was denied the
13 opportunity to join any military groups and was beaten by a sheriff during a traffic stop
14 while en route to New Orleans to have a piece of shrapnel removed from his neck; when he
15 reported to Camp Shelby in Hattiesburg, Mississippi, he encountered racism with its separate
16 lines for blacks and whites and was approached by an armed man shouting at him, "Boy, you
17 need to move over there", all harsh reminders that he was back in the United States; and

18 WHEREAS, Mr. Jones has had his cars blown up three times by the Ku Klux Klan

1 because of his involvement in civil rights issues; and

2 WHEREAS, following the lack of recognition and appreciation for his service to his
3 country, Mr. Jones decided to return to Southern University to complete his law degree,
4 believing that racial changes could be brought about through the law; and

5 WHEREAS, Mr. Jones was only a two-week graduate from Southern University Law
6 School when Rev. T. J. Jemison asked him to serve as the lawyer for the 1953 Baton Rouge
7 Bus Boycott, the country's first large scale bus boycott challenging segregation; and

8 WHEREAS, Mr. Jones did not hesitate to shoulder this monumental responsibility;
9 the boycott ended in two weeks when the Baton Rouge City Council passed an ordinance
10 reforming the bus company's segregationist seating policy; and

11 WHEREAS, two years later the 1953 Baton Rouge Bus Boycott served as the
12 blueprint for the Montgomery Bus Boycott, spearheaded by the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.,
13 who visited Baton Rouge to prepare with Mr. Jones and others; and

14 WHEREAS, Mr. Jones served in the Louisiana House of Representatives from
15 1972-1976, was the first African-American member of the Baton Rouge Bar Association,
16 and practiced law until age ninety-three; and

17 WHEREAS, Mr. Jones, during his fifty-seven-year legal career, successfully fought
18 for pay equity for teachers; sued to desegregate local parks, pools, amusement centers,
19 schools, and courtrooms; represented Southern University student-protesters during the Civil
20 Rights Era; guarded the constitutional rights of countless indigent defendants; and
21 challenged voter discrimination practices.

22 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby
23 commend Mr. Johnnie A. Jones Sr. for his legendary accomplishments as a decorated
24 veteran of World War II and a successful and effective civil rights leader.

25 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Mr. Jones' laudable record has left an indelible
26 mark on civil rights and that his accomplishments and service to Louisiana and the United
27 States are hereby recorded for posterity.

28 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to
29 Mr. Johnnie A. Jones Sr.

The original instrument and the following digest, which constitutes no part of the legislative instrument, were prepared by Ann S. Brown.

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