

2019 Regular Session

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 122

BY REPRESENTATIVES JIMMY HARRIS, ABRAHAM, ABRAMSON, ADAMS, AMEDEE, ANDERS, ARMES, BACALA, BAGLEY, BAGNERIS, BARRAS, BERTHELOT, BILLIOT, BISHOP, BOUIE, BOURRIAQUE, BRASS, CHAD BROWN, TERRY BROWN, CARMODY, CARPENTER, GARY CARTER, ROBBY CARTER, STEVE CARTER, CHANEY, CONNICK, COUSSAN, COX, CREWS, DAVIS, DEVILLIER, DUBUISSON, DUPLESSIS, DWIGHT, EDMONDS, EMERSON, FALCONER, FOIL, FRANKLIN, GAINES, GAROFALO, GISCLAIR, GLOVER, GUINN, LANCE HARRIS, HENRY, HILFERTY, HILL, HODGES, HOFFMANN, HOLLIS, HORTON, HOWARD, HUVAL, IVEY, JACKSON, JAMES, JEFFERSON, JENKINS, MIKE JOHNSON, ROBERT JOHNSON, JONES, JORDAN, LACOMBE, NANCY LANDRY, TERRY LANDRY, LARVADAIN, LEBAS, LEGER, LEOPOLD, LYONS, MACK, MAGEE, MARCELLE, MARINO, MCFARLAND, MCMAHEN, MIGUEZ, DUSTIN MILLER, GREGORY MILLER, MOORE, JAY MORRIS, JIM MORRIS, MOSS, MUSCARELLO, NORTON, PEARSON, PIERRE, POPE, PUGH, PYLANT, RICHARD, SCHEXNAYDER, SEABAUGH, SIMON, SMITH, STAGNI, STEFANSKI, STOKES, TALBOT, THOMAS, TURNER, WHITE, WRIGHT, AND ZERINGUE

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To recognize June 10, 2019, as Leah Chase Day.

WHEREAS, the late Leah Chase was a gifted chef, a central figure in the civil rights movement, and the executive chef of Dooky Chase's Restaurant in New Orleans; and

WHEREAS, Leah Chase was married to the late Edgar "Dooky" Chase, Jr., for seventy years; she was the proud mother of four children; she had sixteen grandchildren and twenty-eight great-grandchildren; and

WHEREAS, lovingly known as the "Queen of Creole Cuisine", after marrying Edgar "Dooky" Chase, Jr., in 1946, she took command of the kitchen in the restaurant that her in-laws had opened in 1941 as a po-boy shop; she helped to transform it into a white-tablecloth, destination restaurant; it was the only establishment of its caliber where African Americans could eat in a legally segregated city; and

WHEREAS, at a time when many doors were closed for African Americans, Dooky Chase's was always open; it was a safe space and a welcoming environment; by the 1950s, it became a meeting place for activists and civic leaders, both black and white, despite the

fact that it was illegal for blacks and whites to eat in restaurants together; Leah Chase fed the Freedom Riders and hosted meetings for the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People; and

WHEREAS, the haven she provided and the contributions she made were vital but were not without consequences, as Dooky and Leah received threatening notes and their restaurant was even bombed once; even after segregation laws were overturned, the Chase family's restaurant served as a neutral ground; and

WHEREAS, she fed the Rev. Martin Luther King, Sr., Sarah Vaughan, Nat King Cole, Quincy Jones, Jesse Jackson, Duke Ellington, Thurgood Marshall, James Baldwin, Ray Charles, and presidents George W. Bush and Barack Obama; and

WHEREAS, in 2012, the Chases formed the Edgar "Dooky" Jr. & Leah Chase Family Foundation to support community groups; the foundation seeks to cultivate and support organizations that work for the cultural arts, education, culinary arts, and social justice; and

WHEREAS, she was the recipient of numerous notable honors and awards, honored by individuals and organizations like the James Beard Foundation, John Folse, the Coalition of 100 Black Women, the Anti-Defamation League, the *Times-Picayune*, and *NOLA.COM*; and

WHEREAS, Leah Chase was a culinary legend and an unwavering advocate for civil rights and full inclusion of all; she was a proud entrepreneur, a believer in the spirit of New Orleans and the good will of all people, and an extraordinary woman of faith; and

WHEREAS, Leah Chase deserves recognition for service to her community in so many ways and for so many years; the life and legacy of Leah Chase hold a special place in the hearts of many residents of the city of New Orleans and the state of Louisiana.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby proclaim June 10, 2019, as Leah Chase Day; does hereby commend Leah Chase for over seven decades of success at the renowned Dooky Chase's Restaurant and her many other accomplishments; and does hereby record for posterity her years of dedication to the inclusion of all citizens of the city of New Orleans.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the family of Leah Chase.

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE