

2020 Regular Session

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 38

BY SENATOR JACKSON

CONDOLENCES. Expresses condolences upon the death of Reverend Dr. Harry Blake.

1 A RESOLUTION

2 To express the sincere condolences of the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana upon the
3 death of Reverend Dr. Harry Blake, pastor and civil rights leader.

4 WHEREAS, it is with sincere regret and profound sorrow that the members of the
5 Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana have learned of the death of Dr. Harry Blake on April
6 8, 2020, at age eighty-five; and

7 WHEREAS, he grew up on a plantation in north Caddo Parish and attended a
8 one-room school; his mother had a third grade education and his father, a sharecropper, did
9 not know how to read or write but knew how to read people; and

10 WHEREAS, while a teenager working at a country store owned by a man named
11 H.L. Whitlow, Dr. Blake came to understand that he was at least as intelligent as many of
12 the farmers who stopped there to buy goods, which inspired him to attend Bishop College
13 in Texas; and

14 WHEREAS, Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., the commencement speaker at
15 Blake's graduation ceremony in 1960, invited him to come to Atlanta to be interviewed for
16 a position with the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, and Reverend King hired
17 him; and

18 WHEREAS, he became the sixteenth pastor of Mt. Canaan Baptist Church on

1 August 4, 1966, and served for fifty-two years, first as pastor and then as pastor emeritus;
2 and

3 WHEREAS, Reverend Blake's leadership gave impetus to phenomenal growth and
4 accomplishments with the church, including a new edifice in 1976 and Family Life Center
5 in 1995, with the church now having a culturally diverse membership of more than two
6 thousand; and

7 WHEREAS, he also served as Interim Pastor of St. Rest Baptist Church in
8 Shreveport; and

9 WHEREAS, Reverend Blake served as Moderator of the Thirteenth District Baptist
10 Association, President of the Louisiana Missionary Baptist State Convention, and Vice
11 President of the Southwest Region for the National Baptist Convention, USA, Inc.; and

12 WHEREAS, over the decades he advocated for equality, justice, and for better
13 education, healthcare, and housing in his community; and

14 WHEREAS, Dr. Blake survived an assassin's bullet, a police beating, and unjust
15 arrests in Shreveport, Louisiana, in the early 1960s as he fought for black people to gain
16 equal rights and was a go-to person in Shreveport for Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. during that
17 era; and

18 WHEREAS, Reverend Blake built a legacy as a pastor, community leader, civil
19 rights leader, and denominational leader; and

20 WHEREAS, the death of Reverend Dr. Harry Blake has left a tremendous void in his
21 community and has created a genuine sense of sorrow in the many individuals who mourn
22 the loss of the kind nature and bright mind of this wonderful man whose memory shall
23 forever remain in their minds and hearts.

24 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana
25 does hereby express sincere and heartfelt condolences upon the death of the Reverend Dr.
26 Harry Blake and does hereby extend posthumous honor and recognition to Reverend Blake
27 for his incomparable legacy which is marked by deep pride and honor.

28 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the
29 family of Reverend Dr. Harry Blake.

The original instrument and the following digest, which constitutes no part of the legislative instrument, were prepared by Jerry J. Guillot.

SR 38 Original	DIGEST 2020 Regular Session	Jackson
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Expresses condolences upon the death of Reverend Dr. Harry Blake.