

2020 Second Extraordinary Session

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 23

BY REPRESENTATIVE NEWELL

A RESOLUTION

To express the condolences of the House of Representatives upon the death of George V. Rainey.

WHEREAS, George V. Rainey was born in New Orleans and educated in the New Orleans public school system; he was a member of the first graduating class at Booker T. Washington High School in 1949; during his graduating year, Louis Armstrong reigned as King Zulu and performed in the school's auditorium; and

WHEREAS, after graduating, Mr. Rainey joined the U.S. Army and served for six years; upon completing his military duties, he returned home and worked for two years before opening Rainey's Restaurant and Catering; for fifty years, Rainey's stood as one of the major African-American-owned restaurants in New Orleans; additionally, Rainey's catering service provided food for the New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival and the Essence Festival; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Rainey was a deeply committed member of the Zulu Social Aid and Pleasure Club since 1972; in 1978, he earned the title of "Zulu Big Shot"; his leadership as a member of Zulu helped the club earn its first ever corporate sponsorship and over forty additional sponsorships throughout his tenure; he served as a Zulu board member from 1978 to 1993, as vice-president from 1991 to 1996, and, again, as a board member from 1996 until 2007; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Rainey has received numerous awards including being recognized by President George W. Bush and The Jefferson Award Foundation for his community service; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Rainey's civic involvement and charitable works cannot be overstated; in 1983, he spearheaded the production of Zulu's first poster series, and in 1993, he founded New Orleans's world-renowned Zulu Lundi Gras Festival; when Hurricane Katrina hit New Orleans in 2005, he returned to the city following the leadership of his

pastor, Bishop James Nelson Brown of Fisher Community Church, and served free food to over one thousand people, daily, for two consecutive months; in 2006, when Mardi Gras was in jeopardy, he helped co-author a speech that was given before the New Orleans city council convincing the members to hold the beloved holiday; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Rainey's proudest moment came in 2019, when he was chosen as King Zulu; at eighty-six years old, he became the oldest king in the Zulu Social Aid and Pleasure Club's history; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Rainey was preceded in death by his wife, Jeanne Robinson Rainey, who passed in 2005; he is survived by his children, Jacquelyn Rainey-Bijou, and her husband Joseph, Gwendolyn Rainey, Monica Rainey-Washington, and her husband Andrew, and Oscar J.D. Rainey, and his wife Joan; his brother, Larry C. Rainey, Sr.; Corey L. Johnson; six grandchildren; three great-grandchildren; two goddaughters; and his devoted friend, Irma Owens; and

WHEREAS, George V. Rainey possessed the New Orleans spirit in its truest form; his commitment to and love for his community will live forever in the memories of those who knew and loved him, and he will be deeply missed.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the House of Representatives of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby express heartfelt condolences on the death of George V. Rainey; does hereby recognize Mr. Rainey's immense love for the city, people, and culture of New Orleans; and does hereby extend sincere hopes and wishes that his family and friends find comfort during this somber time.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the family of George V. Rainey.

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES