

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 5

BY SENATOR BARROW

A RESOLUTION

To commend Archbishop/Dr. Joyce Turner Keller for her unwavering dedication to combating HIV/AIDS stigma and discrimination and for her years of service as a minister, advocate, and community leader.

WHEREAS, Archbishop/Dr. Joyce Turner Keller, a native of Slaughter, Louisiana, has demonstrated remarkable courage and resilience in the face of adversity, transforming her personal challenges into a lifelong mission to educate, support, and advocate for individuals affected by HIV/AIDS; and

WHEREAS, in 1995, Archbishop/Dr. Keller survived a violent attack that ultimately resulted in her being diagnosed with HIV six years later, a revelation that led her to become an outspoken advocate for HIV/AIDS awareness, prevention, and treatment; and

WHEREAS, recognizing the widespread stigma surrounding HIV/AIDS, Archbishop/Dr. Keller has tirelessly worked to dismantle misinformation and fear, speaking before congressional groups in Washington, D.C., multiple times to advocate for increased awareness, resources, and support; and

WHEREAS, Archbishop/Dr. Keller is the founder of Travelers of Christ Evangelistic Ministry, an interdenominational organization dedicated to spreading faith and providing support to those in need, and has incorporated HIV/AIDS education into her ministry; and

WHEREAS, she is also the founder of Aspirations, a nonprofit organization that educates youth on violence prevention, self-esteem building, conflict resolution, and HIV/AIDS awareness, helping young people make informed and healthy life choices; and

WHEREAS, Archbishop/Dr. Keller has dedicated her life to comforting and supporting those living with HIV/AIDS, recognizing that loneliness and societal rejection are as harmful as the disease itself, and advocating for acceptance and compassion within families and faith communities; and

WHEREAS, she has had a diverse and accomplished career, working as a paralegal, seamstress, paraprofessional educator, and even a flight attendant, all while pursuing

academic studies at Louisiana State University, Southern University, and William Carey University in theology, art, psychology, gerontology, and African-American history; and

WHEREAS, she received her doctorate in theology in 2009 from Belle Glades Theological Center, further cementing her commitment to her faith-based advocacy work; and

WHEREAS, despite the physical toll of AIDS, Archbishop/Dr. Keller remains tireless in her activism, maintaining a disciplined routine of exercise and proper nutrition to stay strong, often using her personal experiences and medicine regimen as teaching tools to educate youth on the realities of living with HIV/AIDS; and

WHEREAS, her impactful work has been recognized nationally, including the Honoree Champion for Children Award from the Children's Defense Fund Beat the Odds program in 2011, being profiled in the July/August issue of "Positive Aware Magazine" in Chicago, Illinois and receiving a nomination for the "L'Oréal Paris Woman of the Year 2009 Award"; and

WHEREAS, Archbishop/Dr. Keller's work has reached beyond the borders of the United States, including faith-based missions in Africa, where she furthered her commitment to human rights and health advocacy; and

WHEREAS, her story is one of faith, perseverance, and unwavering dedication to uplifting others, and her legacy as an advocate and minister continues to inspire countless individuals affected by HIV/AIDS and beyond.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby commend Archbishop/Dr. Joyce Turner Keller for her outstanding contributions to HIV/AIDS education and advocacy, her dedication to eradicating stigma and discrimination, and her commitment to empowering individuals and communities through faith, education, and compassion.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to Archbishop/Dr. Joyce Turner Keller.

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE