

2025 Regular Session

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 93

BY SENATOR JENKINS

CONDOLENCES. Expresses sincere condolences upon the death of Bessie D. Smith.

1 A RESOLUTION

2 To express the sincere condolences of the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana upon the
3 death of Bessie D. Smith, a pioneering educator, community leader, and devoted
4 public servant.

5 WHEREAS, it is with deep sorrow and profound respect that the Senate of the
6 Legislature of Louisiana acknowledges the passing on May 2, 2025, of Dr. Bessie D. Smith,
7 a beloved educator, community activist, and former businesswoman whose life was
8 dedicated to service, education, and the upliftment of others; and

9 WHEREAS, Dr. Bessie D. Smith was the cherished daughter of Lena Dupree
10 Davenport and Eddie Davenport Jr., and she built her life on the foundations of family, faith,
11 and civic engagement; and

12 WHEREAS, Dr. Smith was a trailblazer in the fight against poverty in the Stoner Hill
13 community, where she worked tirelessly to develop and lead programs that addressed critical
14 needs and brought meaningful improvements to her neighborhood; and

15 WHEREAS, her leadership extended across various civic and professional
16 organizations, including the Caddo Community Action Agency, Inc. Board, Green Oaks
17 High School Scholarship Board, the NAACP as an officer, the National Council of Negro
18 Women, and the Metropolitan Planning Commission; and

1 WHEREAS, Dr. Smith's enduring legacy as an educator was marked by her service
2 at Riverside Elementary School, where she inspired generations of students, and by the
3 recognition she received, including the Outstanding Elementary Teacher of America in 1972
4 and 1974, and the Caddo Parish School Board's Outstanding Service to Education and
5 Community Service Award; and

6 WHEREAS, she held a Doctor of Education degree, exemplifying her unrelenting
7 commitment to learning and teaching, and she used her knowledge to uplift her community
8 and advocate for positive change; and

9 WHEREAS, her public service also included contributions to Habitat for Humanity
10 and her role as the president of the Stoner Hill Neighborhood Association and was
11 affectionately known as the "Mayor of Stoner Hill," reflecting a deep-rooted commitment
12 to both housing security and local governance; and

13 WHEREAS, Dr. Smith was a woman of faith and a devoted member of Hopewell
14 Baptist Church, drawing spiritual strength that informed every aspect of her service; and

15 WHEREAS, her devotion extended beyond her public endeavors into her personal
16 life, where she was a loving wife for fifty years, a family-centered woman, and a role model
17 to all who knew her; and

18 WHEREAS, the people of Caddo Parish and the state of Louisiana are deeply
19 grateful for the life and legacy of Dr. Bessie D. Smith, whose work will continue to resonate
20 through the lives she touched.

21 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana
22 does hereby express its sincere condolences upon learning of the death of Bessie D. Smith.

23 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the
24 family of Bessie D. Smith.

The original instrument and the following digest, which constitutes no part
of the legislative instrument, were prepared by Senate Legislative Services.
The keyword, summary, and digest do not constitute part of the law or proof
or indicia of legislative intent. [R.S. 1:13(B) and 24:177(E)]
