

2026 Regular Session

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 14

BY REPRESENTATIVE WALTERS

A RESOLUTION

To express the condolences of the House of Representatives upon the death of the Reverend  
Dr. William J. Shaw.

WHEREAS, it is with immense sadness and profound regret that the House of Representatives of the Legislature of Louisiana has learned of the passing, on March 7, 2026, of the Reverend Dr. William J. Shaw; and

WHEREAS, the Reverend Dr. William J. Shaw was born in Marshall, Texas, and was the youngest of six children; he was baptized at the age of seven and accepted the call to ministry at an early age; and

WHEREAS, Reverend Shaw delivered his trial sermon at the age of eleven and was ordained at the age of seventeen while already serving a small Texas congregation; and

WHEREAS, Reverend Shaw graduated summa cum laude from Bishop College at nineteen years old and earned degrees from Union Theological Seminary and Colgate Rochester Divinity School; and

WHEREAS, Reverend Shaw became the pastor of White Rock Baptist Church in West Philadelphia in 1956; he guided the one hundred twenty-seven-year-old church for seven decades, making him one of the region's longest-tenured and most influential ministers; and

WHEREAS, Reverend Shaw rarely missed a Sunday during his seventy-year tenure and devoted his ministry to nurturing congregants through preaching, mentorship, and pastoral care; his "Sheepfold Ministry" empowered lay leaders to comfort families, visit the sick, and support one another in the community; and

WHEREAS, Reverend Shaw served two terms as president of the National Baptist Convention USA, Inc.; he was recognized for his leadership at the highest levels of American government, and President Barack Obama appointed him to the President's Advisory Council on Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships and the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom; and

WHEREAS, Reverend Shaw was an incredibly civic-minded individual who made significant contributions to the Philadelphia community; he served as executive director of the Opportunities Industrialization Center and served on the boards of Junior Achievement of the Delaware Valley and Penn Medicine, where he chaired the trustee board of the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania; and

WHEREAS, Reverend Dr. William J. Shaw is survived by his son, Timothy; two granddaughters; and several great-grandchildren; he will be deeply missed, but the legacy of his service shall live on in perpetuity in the hearts and minds of those he served.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the House of Representatives of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby express heartfelt condolences on the death of the Reverend Dr. William J. Shaw and does hereby extend sincere wishes that his family, friends, congregation, and loved ones find comfort in their shared memories of his beautiful life.

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES