

2026 Regular Session

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 64

BY REPRESENTATIVE WALTERS

COMMENDATIONS: Commemorates the legacy of Shreveport native Johnnie Cochran, Jr.

1 A RESOLUTION

2 To commemorate the legacy of Shreveport native Johnnie Cochran, Jr.

3 WHEREAS, it is with immense pride that the House of Representatives of the  
4 Legislature of Louisiana recognizes Johnnie Cochran, Jr., for his achievements as a litigator  
5 and civil libertarian and commemorates the legacy of his work; and

6 WHEREAS, Johnnie L. Cochran, Jr., was born on October 2, 1937, in Shreveport,  
7 Louisiana, to Johnnie Cochran, Sr., and Hattie B. Cochran; he grew up with two sisters, Pearl  
8 and Martha Jean, during a period when Louisiana was reeling from the effects of the Great  
9 Depression and remained deeply entrenched in Jim Crow laws; and

10 WHEREAS, Johnnie moved to California with his family at the age of six; the family  
11 eventually settled in Los Angeles, and he lived there for the remainder of his life; he  
12 attended Los Angeles High School, where he was a member of the honor society; and

13 WHEREAS, Thurgood Marshall inspired a sixteen-year-old Johnnie to study law by  
14 successfully arguing that the "separate but equal" doctrine was unconstitutional during the  
15 historic 1954 case, *Brown v. Board of Education*; and

16 WHEREAS, Johnnie attended the University of California Los Angeles (UCLA) and  
17 graduated in 1959; he enrolled at Loyola Law School and soon became the first African  
18 American law clerk in the Los Angeles City Attorney's Office; his superiors noticed his  
19 fascination with trial work and assigned him to represent the city in small claims court; and

1           WHEREAS, Mr. Cochran graduated from Loyola Law School on June 1, 1962, and  
2 began preparation for the California Bar Exam; after learning that he passed the exam, he  
3 returned to the city attorney's office as a deputy attorney; and

4           WHEREAS, Mr. Cochran began his work as an attorney on January 10, 1963, and  
5 by 1965, he was regarded as one of the city attorney's top trial lawyers; he left the city  
6 attorney's office in March 1965 and began a private practice with Gerald D. Lenoir; soon  
7 after, he represented numerous clients who were involved in the Watts Riots and renewed  
8 his commitment to effect change in the criminal and civil justice systems; and

9           WHEREAS, Mr. Cochran started his own practice with a goal to remedy the  
10 disconnect between the community and local government by working within the legal  
11 system; while continuing his criminal defense work, he began handling an increasing  
12 number of civil cases; and

13           WHEREAS, Mr. Cochran was appointed to represent Willie Stafford, a member  
14 of the Black Panther Party, following a December 1969 shootout between the party, the FBI,  
15 and the LAPD's Criminal Conspiracy Division; in December 1971, he made his closing  
16 arguments in defense of Stafford and the other party members on trial; he secured not guilty  
17 verdicts for the majority of the seventy-two charges alleged against his clients; and

18           WHEREAS, Mr. Cochran worked tirelessly to overturn Geronimo Pratt's wrongful  
19 murder conviction; Mr. Pratt was a Black Panther Party leader and decorated veteran of the  
20 Vietnam War who received two Bronze Stars, a Silver Star, and two Purple Hearts for his  
21 service; his conviction was vacated on June 10, 1997, after twenty-seven years; and

22           WHEREAS, Mr. Cochran was known as the go-to attorney for many celebrities in  
23 the 1990s; his clients included Tupac Shakur, Snoop Dogg, Sean Combs, Michael Jackson,  
24 Jim Brown, and Riddick Bowe; he is most famously remembered as one of O.J. Simpson's  
25 defense attorneys during the internationally televised trial; and

26           WHEREAS, Johnnie Cochran, Jr., was a dedicated servant of the people who  
27 established himself as one of the best trial attorneys in American history, and it is most  
28 fitting to honor his historic legacy.

29           THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the House of Representatives of the  
30 Legislature of Louisiana does hereby commemorate the legacy of Shreveport native Johnnie

- 1 Cochran, Jr., and does hereby express enduring appreciation for his historic work as a trial
  - 2 lawyer and civil libertarian.
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DIGEST

The digest printed below was prepared by House Legislative Services. It constitutes no part of the legislative instrument. The keyword, one-liner, abstract, 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)]

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Walters

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