

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 152

BY SENATOR TARVER

A RESOLUTION

To express the sincere condolences upon the passing of a mainstay for social justice, Mamie Love Wallace.

WHEREAS, it is with deep regret and profound sorrow that the passing of Mamie Love Wallace, on Sunday, April 22, 2018, at age ninety-six, has been learned by the citizens of Louisiana and the members of the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana; and

WHEREAS, Mamie Love Wallace was born one of twelve children to Robert and Lula Stewart in the Calvary community on Seven Pines Road near Benton, Louisiana; Robert was a minister and Lula a schoolteacher and civil rights activist; and

WHEREAS, as soon as Mamie graduated from Bossier Parish Training School in Benton she moved to Shreveport, worked as a cosmetologist, and joined the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, and other organizations "designed to fight for the rights of all"; and

WHEREAS, Mamie was married to Clemmie Love for more than thirty years and, after his death, married Jack Wallace who died eight years later; and

WHEREAS, she reared two nieces, Anne Stewart and Johnnie Belle Stewart, as well as a godchild, Gwendolyn Barnes; and

WHEREAS, with a career as a cosmetologist Ms. Wallace and her friend Ann Brewster opened and co-owned Modern Beauty Shop with Ms. Bernice Smith, and were instrumental in changing the course of Black/African American's civil rights in Shreveport; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Wallace was very upset about the fact that African Americans could not dine at most restaurants, drink at certain water fountains, or try on clothing in stores; and

WHEREAS, in 1958, she met Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and Dr. Ralph Abernathy in New Orleans, Louisiana, and the North Louisiana Civil Rights birth began as she pioneered a cause she knew to be just and righteous, the concept that all human beings were

to be afforded equal protection before the law; and

WHEREAS, she picketed Stan's Record Shop, sat in the downtown bus station when the "Freedom Riders" came through with food and drinks for them, and also participated in a march down Milam Street to protest the 1963 church bombing in Birmingham, Alabama; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Wallace played a major role in bringing the late Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. to Shreveport in 1962, where he galvanized crowds and motivated the masses at Galilee Baptist Church to take a stand against racial injustice and unfair practices in the city; and

WHEREAS, she was affectionately known as the "Mother of the Civil Rights Movement" in North Louisiana; her life dedication and motivation were seamlessly demonstrated in her commitment to freedom and justice for all; she appeared on the C-SPAN Network in 1997 and proudly attended the inauguration and witnessed the nation's first African-American president being sworn into office, Barack Obama on January 2009, a dream come true; and

WHEREAS, her visionary leadership united with other civil rights icons from this community and across this state and nation with the birth of the North Louisiana Civil Rights Coalition and the museum that honor the history of this part of the country is now a reality; and

WHEREAS, Mamie Wallace was an extraordinary individual of profound moral character and a graceful, elegant, and passionate woman who wanted to unite people of all races, who had a courageous and unwavering spirit, and who always acknowledged God to lead and guide her every step of the way; and

WHEREAS, Mamie Wallace remains an inspirational figure for us all, her advocacy for "the cause" resonates within the hearts and minds of all of us who seek change for the disenfranchised; and

WHEREAS, Mamie Wallace shall be remembered for her legacy of activism that gave the civil rights movement its momentum to defy long-standing segregation laws and challenge the social, economic, and legal oppression of racial discrimination and for her dedication to the betterment of all mankind.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby express sincere condolences upon the death of Mamie Love Wallace, does hereby record for posterity her highly significant contributions to the civil rights movement, does hereby extend enduring appreciation for the way that her courage has inspired all those who have come after her, and does hereby recognize that her memory shall live forever in the annals of history and in the minds and hearts of the countless individuals whose lives she touched with her singular legacy of courage and integrity.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to Gwendolyn Barnes.

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE