

2018 Regular Session

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 163

BY REPRESENTATIVES GAINES, BAGNERIS, BOUIE, BRASS, CARPENTER, GARY CARTER, COX, FRANKLIN, GLOVER, HALL, JIMMY HARRIS, HUNTER, JACKSON, JAMES, JEFFERSON, JENKINS, JORDAN, TERRY LANDRY, LYONS, MARCELLE, DUSTIN MILLER, NORTON, PIERRE, AND SMITH

A RESOLUTION

To commend posthumously the former and late Louisiana legislator and mayor of New Orleans, the Honorable Ernest Nathan "Dutch" Morial, for his purpose-filled life of public service and dismantling racial barriers.

WHEREAS, affectionately known as "Dutch", Ernest Nathan Morial, the youngest of six children was born on October 9, 1929, in New Orleans, Louisiana, to Leonie V. and Walter Etienne Morial; Ernest Morial made his transition on December 24, 1989, at the age of sixty; and

WHEREAS, Ernest "Dutch" Morial was a skillful attorney, political icon, and civil rights activist known for achieving many firsts throughout his life; Mr. Morial was known for being a person of resourcefulness, an advocate, and a trailblazer; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Morial was an accomplished politician who had a genuine heart and concern for people and his community; his commitment to being a servant and leader and his dedication to equality and social justice were hallmarks of his character; and

WHEREAS, Ernest Nathan "Dutch" Morial earned a bachelor of science in business administration from Xavier University in 1951; he later went on to become the first African American to receive a law degree from Louisiana State University Law School (now known as the Paul M. Hebert Law Center) in 1954; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Morial served in the U.S. Army Intelligence Corps during the Korean conflict from 1954 to 1956; and

WHEREAS, he married Sybil G. Hayden in 1955, and to this union, five children were born: Julie, Marc, Jacques, Cheri, and Monique; and

WHEREAS, after serving in the military, Mr. Morial returned to his law practice in New Orleans in 1956 to serve as general counsel to the Standard Life Insurance Company until 1967; Mr. Morial served as assistant U.S. attorney for New Orleans from 1965 to 1967; and

WHEREAS, as president of the New Orleans Chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) from 1962 to 1965, Mr. Morial was at the forefront of black protests and the dismantling of Jim Crow laws; he became an attorney with the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, serving on the national level; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Morial participated in the 1960 Dryades Street boycott and fought for the desegregation of buses and streetcars and the integration of Louisiana State University of New Orleans; he also broke many barriers for other African Americans by filing successful suits to end desegregation practices in New Orleans and Louisiana including in the city's public schools, recreation department, taxicabs, airport, and municipal auditorium; and

WHEREAS, in 1967, Mr. Morial was elected to the Louisiana state legislature, becoming the first African American elected since Reconstruction; he was also the first African American assistant U.S. attorney in New Orleans, the first African American to serve as juvenile court judge, and the first African American on the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals; and

WHEREAS, in 1977, Mr. Morial announced his candidacy for mayor of New Orleans and sued the State Judicial Commission for the right to campaign while remaining a judge; Mr. Morial won the general election by six thousand votes, becoming the first African American mayor of New Orleans; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Morial gained national attention in his first term as mayor by standing up to police and sanitation workers, which in turn led to a city-wide strike resulting in the cancellation of the celebration of Mardi Gras in 1979; and

WHEREAS, in 1982, Mr. Morial was re-elected as mayor of New Orleans; two years later, he was elected president of the United States Conference of Mayors; and

WHEREAS, the citizens of the city of New Orleans and the state of Louisiana will always be indebted to Mr. Morial's commitment to making a difference in the lives of others; Mr. Morial has inspired many through his selfless efforts; he serves as an example of what one can do by committing one's life to Christ, family, and friends and working hard to accomplish goals that are within God's will for this life.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the House of Representatives of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby commend posthumously former state representative and mayor of New Orleans, Ernest Nathan "Dutch" Morial; does hereby celebrate his legacy and salute his purpose-filled life of dismantling racial barriers, building alliances, and improving the quality of life for the people of the city of New Orleans and the state of Louisiana.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a suitable copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the family of Ernest Nathan "Dutch" Morial.

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES