

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 34

BY SENATOR TARVER

A RESOLUTION

To express the sincere condolences of the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana upon the death of Dr. Charley M. Lester Jr. and to posthumously recognize his many years of dedicated service to the citizens of Shreveport, Caddo Parish, the state of Louisiana, and the United States of America.

WHEREAS, it is with deep regret and profound sorrow that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana has learned of the passing of Dr. Charley M. Lester Jr. on June 20, 2020, at age eighty-six; and

WHEREAS, he was born on February 28, 1934, in Scottsville, Texas, to Charley and Edna Lester, graduated from Pemberton High School at the age of fifteen, and entered Wiley College where he obtained his undergraduate degree, and while there pledged Omega Psi Phi fraternity; and

WHEREAS, at the age of eighteen, he pursued his graduate degree from Howard University in Washington, D.C., but prior to obtaining the degree, he transferred to Meharry Medical College in Nashville, Tennessee, one of only three historically black medical schools in the United States; and

WHEREAS, at Meharry, while pursuing the field of dentistry, he was elected class president each of his four years there; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Lester graduated from Meharry with a Doctor of Dental Surgery degree in 1960 and then joined the United States Air Force; and

WHEREAS, while in the military, he did a tour of three years in England where he operated his own dental clinic; and

WHEREAS, after completing his tour of duty, Dr. Lester returned home to Shreveport, Louisiana, and married his sweetheart whom he met while attending Meharry, and they were married for fifty-four years; and

WHEREAS, out of this union were born two daughters, Kai, the oldest, who is a podiatrist in Houston, Texas, and Charmel who is a lab analyst in Shreveport; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Lester became a member of St. Paul United Methodist Church in 1968 and was active in the chancel choir and also the United Methodist Men; and

WHEREAS, with the support of his father, he opened his own dental practice in the Mooretown community where he also chose to build a home and raise his family; and

WHEREAS, in 1971, Dr. Lester ventured into elective public office as one of the first African Americans to serve on the Caddo Parish Police Jury, which is now the Caddo Parish Commission; he was also a board member of the Community Action Agency, active in the Civil Rights Movement, and a member of the Home Mortgage Authority; and

WHEREAS, he was the first African American appointed to serve as a member of the Louisiana State Board of Dental Examiners; and

WHEREAS, he was an active member in the State and National Black Dental associations and the American Dental Association for over fifty years, and he received the Louisiana Dental Association Distinguished Service Award in 2005; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Lester retired from dentistry in 2012 after fifty years of service to the community; and

WHEREAS, he continued to give back to the community by serving in church organizations and also as a member of the New Dimensions Chorale Society; and

WHEREAS, during his life, Dr. Charley M. Lester Jr. brought honor and distinction upon himself, his family, his community, and his country.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby express sincere condolences upon the death of Dr. Charley M. Lester Jr., posthumously recognize and record for posterity his distinguished career of professional excellence, commitment of service to his community, caring and loving spirit, and unyielding advocacy efforts for justice and equality, and extend enduring appreciation for the tremendous pride and honor he will forever bring to Shreveport, Caddo Parish, the state of Louisiana, and the United States of America.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to Calvin Ben Lester.

---

PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE