

Senate Resolution 273

By: Senators Jones of the 10th, Harbison of the 15th, Karinshak of the 48th, Orrock of the 36th, Jackson of the 2nd and others

A RESOLUTION

- 1 Honoring the life and memory of Paul Burke Johnson; and for other purposes.
- 2 WHEREAS, the great State of Georgia mourns the loss of one of its most distinguished
3 citizens with the passing of Paul Burke Johnson on January 21, 2019; and
- 4 WHEREAS, Paul Johnson was born on August 11, 1935, in Prince George County,
5 Maryland, the only child of Paul and Gladys Hobbs Johnson; and
- 6 WHEREAS, he served as a guardian to this nation's freedom and liberty, a proud member
7 of the United States Army; and
- 8 WHEREAS, his love for music and a passion for his trumpet convinced the young Army
9 veteran to move to Atlanta, where he enrolled in Morris Brown College; and
- 10 WHEREAS, while at Morris Brown College, he had a chance to encounter with popular
11 radio disc jockey Jack Gibson which changed the course of Burke's career and his life; and
- 12 WHEREAS, while he was still in college, he began working behind the scenes at WERD
13 radio, America's first black owned and operated radio station; and
- 14 WHEREAS, Burke went on to become the Programming Director at WOAK Radio in the
15 early 1970s and hired many talented young deejays; and
- 16 WHEREAS, it was during this time that Burke met and fell in love with a beautiful young
17 woman who had just been crowned homecoming queen. They were married and to this union
18 four children were born; and
- 19 WHEREAS, Burke hired as a disc jockey and announcer "The Burke Johnson Show," the
20 leading show to listen to in the Atlanta area; and

21 WHEREAS, in the 1980s he hosted "Inspirations Across America" – the First Black
22 syndicated contemporary Gospel program on the air in the United States; and

23 WHEREAS, Burke always had great guests in the studios to engage in compelling
24 conversations about current events. They included Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Muhammad
25 Ali, Sidney Poitier, Count Basie, Ray Charles, and others; and

26 WHEREAS, Burke was a dedicated member of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, which he joined
27 while a student at Morris Brown College; and

28 WHEREAS, Burke eventually retired from the United States Postal Service in Atlanta where
29 he lived his final years as a member of Shiloh Baptist Church after serving as a deacon at
30 Saint Peter Baptist Church for many years; and

31 WHEREAS, a compassionate and generous man, Burke will be remembered for his love of
32 family and will be missed by all who had the great fortune of knowing him.

33 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE that the members of this body
34 join in honoring the life and memory of Paul Burke Johnson and express their deepest and
35 most sincere regret at his passing.

36 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Secretary of the Senate is authorized and directed
37 to make an appropriate copy of this resolution available for distribution to the family of Paul
38 Burke Johnson.