

Regular Session, 2012

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 34

BY REPRESENTATIVE COX

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To commend posthumously the life of Lutrill Amos Payne, Sr.

WHEREAS, it is with deep appreciation that Lutrill Payne's many contributions to the people of Louisiana are recognized, because were it not for pioneers like Mr. Payne, generations of Louisianians would not be able to take nearly as much pride in their great state as they do now; and

WHEREAS, during an era when the people of Louisiana were perpetuating an unjust social order that denied their fellow Louisianians their civil and human rights, Mr. Payne demanded justice; and

WHEREAS, born in Lillie, Louisiana, in 1910, Lutrill Amos Payne was forced to leave Union Parish to study at a high school that educated blacks, North Louisiana Agricultural and Industrial School in Grambling, before studying at Prairie View College and graduating from Southern University with a bachelor's degree in Agriculture in 1936; and

WHEREAS, after serving his country in World War II and distinguishing himself as an instructor of agriculture in Allen, Mr. Payne desired a graduate education in Agri-Business from the Louisiana State University Graduate School; and

WHEREAS, in 1951, with the expertise of attorney A.P. Tureaud of New Orleans, Mr. Payne filed suit in the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Louisiana to integrate the Louisiana State University Graduate School and ultimately won a judgment in his favor rendered by District Judge Herbert W. Christenberry; and

WHEREAS, after earning his master's degree at Southern University, Mr. Payne held teaching positions in Union, DeSoto, and Ouachita parishes before taking a job in Slidell that he chose to leave because of his principal's order for him to bow in deference to whites at all times; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Payne moved to Natchitoches thereafter, worked as a teacher and principal, and purchased and successfully operated a four hundred acre farm on Spanish Lake; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Payne's trailblazing was not limited to the educational arena; he was one of the first blacks to successfully register to vote in Natchitoches Parish, the first black person in Natchitoches Parish to run for public office when he vied unsuccessfully for the post of Commissioner of Public Safety in the 1970s, and the first black citizen to sit on the board of directors of a bank in Natchitoches, beginning in 1981; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Payne's contributions to the state of Louisiana extended beyond standing on the front lines of an early battle for a more racially just social order; he served on the Natchitoches Civil Service board for twenty-one years and on the board of deacons and as church treasurer at First Baptist Church until his death in 1999, in addition to being the founding sponsor and dedicated mentor of the Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity chapter at Northwestern State University; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Payne was survived by his wife of fifty-nine years, Pearl Payne, who earned her master's degree in education from Louisiana State University in 1956, and with whom Mr. Payne collaborated in their service as the first managers of the Natchitoches-Thomas Housing Complex; and

WHEREAS, the lives of all Louisianians will forever be enriched by Mr. Payne's tireless efforts to forge a least resistant path for blacks then unborn to be accepted into Louisiana's higher education system.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby posthumously commend Lutrill Amos Payne, Sr., for his service to the state of Louisiana, does hereby recognize and record for posterity the outstanding accomplishments and singular contributions of this wonderful man, and does hereby extend to him and his family enduring gratitude for the pride and honor he will forever bring to his community, state, and nation.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a suitable copy of this Resolution be transmitted to Pearl Payne.

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE