

2017 First Extraordinary Session

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 19

BY REPRESENTATIVE JEFFERSON

Expresses condolences upon the death of Willie Clyde "Hoghead" Curry of Homer

A RESOLUTION

To express the condolences of the House of Representatives upon the death of Willie Clyde "Hoghead" Curry of Homer.

WHEREAS, the members of the House of Representatives were saddened to learn of the death of Willie Clyde "Hoghead" Curry on February 12, 2017; and

WHEREAS, the life of Willie Clyde Curry began September 16, 1943, when he was born to Willie Clyde and Hattie Burns Curry, the second of three children; he attended Homer Colored High School and Mayfield High School; and

WHEREAS, Willie Clyde played football at Mayfield High School and was one of the fastest and most unstoppable players on the field; his habit of running with his eyes closed and his head down earned him the nickname "Hoghead"; Hoghead was voted team captain; and

WHEREAS, Hoghead Curry answered the call of duty to his country and enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps in 1965; he served thirty-eight months in the Corps and spent twenty-nine months in Vietnam as a highly respected squad leader; Hoghead was honorably discharged with the rank of sergeant; and

WHEREAS, upon his return home, Hoghead faced another battle: the fight for civil rights; he rose to a leadership role in civil rights protests in his native Homer, yet a peaceful demonstration in which he participated ended with water hoses turned on demonstrators, and Hoghead was prosecuted and found guilty of inciting to riot; his conviction led to an eighty-eight year prison sentence; and

WHEREAS, after serving four years of his sentence, Hoghead was released on the condition that he would be on parole for twenty years outside the state of Louisiana; and

WHEREAS, Hoghead moved to California to live with his sister Frances; during his exile in California, Hoghead met and married his soulmate, best friend, and the love of his life, Retha Pearl Walker; she was a divorcee with three children and he was a student at Compton College and an employee at Long Beach Naval Shipyard; the two often read the Bible together and shared a passion for African American history, the fight for social justice, promoting the welfare of youth, improving the community, and education; and

WHEREAS, when his mother became sick, Hoghead violated the terms of his parole to return to Homer to care for her; he and Retha moved back to Homer and provided care for Miss Hattie until her death; and

WHEREAS, Hoghead and Retha Curry pursued their civil rights passion and marched, picketed, helped needy families, and fought relentlessly for equality and justice; Hoghead enrolled at Grambling State University to study criminal justice and received an achievement award in family law; he wanted to seek public office, but his felony conviction prevented him from doing so; and

WHEREAS, a law was passed in Louisiana to grant pardons to first-time felons who had served their terms; Representative Richard "Rick" Gallot notified Hoghead of the change in the law, and Hoghead Curry became the first citizen in the state to be pardoned under the new law; he was appointed by Governor Bobby Jindal to serve on the Homer Town Council for the remainder of the term vacated upon the death of J.C. Moore; Hoghead also was appointed to the local housing authority board and served as chairman; and

WHEREAS, Hoghead Curry was elected representative of District One of the Homer Town Council and was in his first term when he passed away; he was called a "foot soldier for justice" by the NAACP Claiborne Parish Youth Council, and like any good soldier, Hoghead stayed on the battlefield until he was no longer able to fight; he will be missed, but his life story will be proudly and fondly recalled by all who knew and loved him.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the House of Representatives of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby express deepest sympathies and extend heartfelt condolences to the family and friends of Willie Clyde "Hoghead" Curry upon his passing and does hereby offer sincere thoughts and prayers for peace and comfort.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a suitable copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the family of Willie Clyde Curry.

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES