

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 155

BY SENATOR PETERSON

A RESOLUTION

To commend Veronica L. Downs-Dorsey on twenty-five years of teaching vocal music at McDonogh 35 Senior High School and on thirty-five years as an educator in the Orleans Parish school system.

WHEREAS, Veronica L. Downs-Dorsey, lovingly called "Ms. V" is a lifelong resident of New Orleans and a staple in the gospel music community; and

WHEREAS, her early years were spent in a warm Christian environment with positive role models and achievers from whom she drew inspiration and encouragement; and

WHEREAS, her musical talents and leadership were nurtured at St. Monica Catholic Church and at the tender age of fourteen, Ms. V directed her first choir, The Golden Emeralds, at Union Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church; and

WHEREAS, Ms. V graduated from McDonogh 35 Senior High School in 1974, and earned a Bachelor of Music Education from Xavier University in New Orleans and a Master of Music Education from Southeastern Louisiana University in Hammond; and

WHEREAS, she has been an educator in the Orleans Parish school system for the past thirty-five years and the choral music teacher at McDonogh 35 Senior High School for the past twenty-five years; and

WHEREAS, the choir at McDonogh 35 Senior High School, commonly called the Singing Roneagles, is historically renowned as having been the first high school gospel choir to assemble in the city of New Orleans and the first high school gospel choir to perform at the New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival, having performed in the gospel tent every year since their first performance; and

WHEREAS, under Ms. V's direction and leadership, the Singing Roneagles have received numerous nominations and accepted their Best of the Beat Awards from Offbeat Magazine for Best Gospel Group for the second consecutive year during a gala held at Generations Hall on January 21, 2016; and

WHEREAS, Ms. V is the past director of the New Orleans Gospel Soul Children and currently leads the Voices of Peter Claver, the main gospel choir of St. Peter Claver Catholic Church; and

WHEREAS, she is a member of The New Orleans Black Chorale, where she serves as its principal pianist, and is also a member of Tyrone Foster and the Arc Singers, the Davell Crawford Singers, and the New Orleans Chapter of the Gospel Music Workshop of America, Inc., and is co-director of the Archdiocesan Mass Choir; and

WHEREAS, Ms. V received the 2015 Trailblazer Award at the NOLA Gospel Awards and was honored in 2016 by the New Orleans City Council in recognition of Women's History Month; and

WHEREAS, Veronica L. Downs-Dorsey is an artist who demonstrates her talents as a performer, soloist, director, instructor, organist, and pianist for all to enjoy; and

WHEREAS, her love for gospel music, her students, and her Creator make her a positive role model, whose attributes strengthen her church, her students, her community, and the state of Louisiana.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby commend Veronica L. "Ms. V" Downs-Dorsey on twenty-five glorious years of teaching choral music at McDonogh 35 Senior High School and on thirty-five years of tireless dedication and guidance to students in the Orleans Parish school system.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to Veronica L. Downs-Dorsey.

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE