

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 232

BY SENATOR BOUDREAUX

A RESOLUTION

To express the sincere and heartfelt condolences of the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana upon the death of Dr. Raphael A. Baranco Sr.

WHEREAS, it is with great sadness that the citizens and the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana have learned of the death of Dr. Raphael A. Baranco Sr. on May 5, 2018; and

WHEREAS, Raphael A. Baranco Sr. was born on November 19, 1932, in Baton Rouge, Louisiana; and

WHEREAS, the eldest of eight children born to parents Dr. B.V. Baranco Jr. and Evelyn Edmond, he grew up in a loving family with strong Catholic values, committed to community service, education, and justice; and

WHEREAS, he graduated from Southern University Laboratory High School in Baton Rouge and enrolled at Xavier University of Louisiana at age sixteen; and

WHEREAS, following his graduation in 1956, he enlisted in the United States Army, serving his state and his country overseas; and

WHEREAS, upon his return, he was accepted to, and eventually graduated from, Meharry Medical College School of Dentistry in Nashville, Tennessee, where he met and fell in love with Terry Bryant, a student at Tennessee A&I State College, and the two married in June of 1961; and

WHEREAS, he accepted an internship in Jersey City, New Jersey, where their first child Angela was born; they then moved back to Nashville where he taught at Meharry School of Dentistry and welcomed their second child, Rachel; and

WHEREAS, they then moved to Tuskegee, Alabama, where he worked at the VA Hospital; but they ultimately returned to Louisiana, settling in Lafayette as their final move, and their third and last child, Raphael Jr., was born; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Raphael A. Baranco Sr. established his private dental practice on Louisiana Avenue, becoming the first black dentist in Lafayette, where he spent many hours

building his practice and engaging in community work; and

WHEREAS, he was a loving and devoted husband, a committed father, and cherished grandfather, brother, uncle, and cousin whose family was of the utmost importance in his life; he enjoyed fishing, traveling, playing sports, and spending quality time with family; he was always very active in his children's schools, and participated in the schools' governance and parent organizations; he encouraged his children to do their best in every undertaking and expected them to be humble, thoughtful, respectful, and kind to others; and

WHEREAS, for his children and so many others, the love and partnership shared between himself and Terry showed a wonderful and positive example of a loving marriage; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Baranco Sr. was an education activist who believed that education is the birthright of every American child; and

WHEREAS, this strong belief led him to run for his district's seat on the Lafayette Parish School Board where he was elected and served his community for eighteen years; and

WHEREAS, he was the first black elected official in the history of Lafayette Parish, testified before the federal courts against continued segregation of public schools, and was instrumental in establishing the "All Day Kindergarten" and Head Start programs, giving educational access to economically disadvantaged, at-risk and children of color; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Baranco Sr. practiced dentistry for over fifty-five years with passion and competence, he did not turn away anyone who needed help, and treated each and every patient with dignity; and

WHEREAS, throughout his career he worked as a dental consultant for Title XIX, the United States Public Health Service, and as an advisor and instructor for the Delta Business School Dental Assistant Training Program; and

WHEREAS, he maintained his professional membership in the Capitol City Dental Society, Pelican State Dental Association, the Academy of General Dentistry, and the National Dental Association; and

WHEREAS, he enjoyed sharing his professional experience through mentoring, always opening his office to guide and train students from dental assistant programs and new dentists who were just starting out after graduation; and

WHEREAS, he was an exemplary and highly admired citizen of Louisiana who worked tirelessly on a multitude of business, civic, religious, and political causes throughout his lifetime serving on or holding membership in several civic and service organizations: the Lafayette Human Relations Council, the St. Martin-Iberia-Lafayette (SMILE) Community Action Agency, the Lafayette Community Action Agency, the Holy Family School Board, and the Lafayette Chapter for the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP); he was a member of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity; a charter member of the Lafayette Chapter of 100 Black Men, Chi Delta Mu Fraternity, the Bonanza Social Club, the Bunch Club, and Alpha Xi Boule of Sigma Pi Phi Fraternity, and was a parishioner of Immaculate Heart of Mary Catholic Church; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Raphael A. Baranco Sr. received many honors, accolades, and recognitions for his service, leadership, integrity, and accomplishments throughout his lifetime, most recently the 2018 Southwest Louisiana Black Chamber of Commerce's Living Legend Award, and was named the 100 Black Men 2017 Visionary Leader; some of his other honors included the Alpha Phi Alpha Man of the Year, Alpha Phi Alpha Community Service Award, Omega Psi Phi Outstanding Black Citizen Award, Man of the Year, Prince Hall Masons, marshall for the MLK and Black History Month parade, and the Lafayette Council on Human Relations Martin Luther King Jr. Humanitarian Service Award; and

WHEREAS, he was an early riser and found solace in the quiet of the mornings with a mug of Community coffee; his morning routine included reading the newspapers, making notes, and highlighting articles for Terry to read and cut out later; born during the Depression, he strongly believed everything had a use, a second, third, and even fourth use; he was very handy and could fix most anything, and he enjoyed tinkering with electronics; and

WHEREAS, he enjoyed traveling with friends, he and Terry cruised the seas, attended conventions, played Bid Whist and celebrated just about every holiday and festival; they enjoyed good food; he even took requests from his children and grandchildren so on their visits home their rice dressing and his BBQ would be on the menu; he relished in providing wisdom from his many life experiences, enjoyed a heated conversation or debate, and as everyone who knew him knew, he loved his mug of chocolate ice cream; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Raphael A. Baranco Sr. joyfully committed himself to a life of excellence, integrity, scholarship, and service and was respected and loved; upon his death, the world lost a unique individual who left an indelible mark and huge void for family, friends, clients, community, and all those who had the privilege to have known him; and

WHEREAS, the strength of our communities and the overall vitality of American society depend, in great measure, upon the dedication of men like Dr. Raphael A. Baranco Sr. who use their considerable talents and resources to leave a legacy and to benefit future generations.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby acknowledge the remarkable life and accomplishments of Dr. Raphael A. Baranco Sr. and extends sincere and heartfelt condolences to his family upon the occasion of his death.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the family of Dr. Raphael A. Baranco Sr.

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE