

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 43

BY SENATOR BARROW

A RESOLUTION

To commend Zion City on the occasion of its 100th anniversary.

WHEREAS, the one-street neighborhood known as Zion City was once one of North Baton Rouge's most self-sufficient neighborhoods; and

WHEREAS, African-American families, mostly with East Feliciana Parish or West Feliciana Parish roots, founded Zion City in 1920, as a local white landowner sold the first lots that year; and

WHEREAS, children of the community attended school at the Greater Beechgrove Missionary Baptist which at that time was on Hooper Road; and

WHEREAS, Zion City residents came together in late 1938 and decided to have a school for their children and in the fall of 1950, the initial first grade class entered the Zion City Elementary School, which not only housed students of Zion City, but also those that lived in the Dixie community; and

WHEREAS, for many years, Zion City Elementary School served as the center of the community, providing a place of enrichment and nourishment to the children of that district; and

WHEREAS, the school closed thirty years later due to desegregation of the East Baton Rouge Parish School System; and

WHEREAS, the area evolved into a community that consisted of many African-American businesses owned by those who lived in the community; and

WHEREAS, from the historic Gardenia Club to what was once Caruso & Sons, Zion City was an exuberant residential and commercial center with an array of churches, cafes, clubs, and stores and a few streets over in Fortune Park Addition was the United States Post Office; and

WHEREAS, over the years there has been some decay, but native son Councilman Charles R. Kelly, was elected as District 5 Councilman which included the Zion City community, and the community grew and incorporated services and programs that would improve the quality of life for those who lived and worked there; and

WHEREAS, today the community with its colorful residents, proudly celebrates one hundred years of resilience by connecting with the past and planning how to move forward into the next hundred years; and

WHEREAS, the Zion City 100 Year Planning Committee will be unveiling a plan for beautification, crime prevention, and economic development later this summer in celebration of the one hundredth birthday of the community; and

WHEREAS, the citizens of Zion City merit a sincere and heartfelt measure of commendation upon the memorable and historic occasion of their community's centennial anniversary and for the tremendous pride and honor they bring to their community, East Baton Rouge Parish, and the state of Louisiana.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby commend Zion City on the occasion of its one hundredth anniversary, does hereby commend the citizens of Zion City both past and present, for their outstanding accomplishments and for their extraordinary contributions to their community and state, does hereby record the singular place that Zion City holds in the history and future of Louisiana, and does hereby extend to the citizens of Zion City best wishes for continued success and happiness in all of their future endeavors and as they commemorate this special anniversary.

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE