

112TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. RES. 289

Celebrating the life and achievements of Reverend Fred Lee Shuttlesworth and honoring him for his tireless efforts in the fight against segregation and his steadfast commitment to the civil rights of all people.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

OCTOBER 6, 2011

Mr. BROWN of Ohio (for himself, Mr. SHELBY, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. PORTMAN, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. LAUTENBERG, Mr. INHOFE, Ms. MIKULSKI, and Mr. REID) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to

RESOLUTION

Celebrating the life and achievements of Reverend Fred Lee Shuttlesworth and honoring him for his tireless efforts in the fight against segregation and his steadfast commitment to the civil rights of all people.

Whereas the Reverend Fred Lee Shuttlesworth was born on March 18, 1922, in Mount Meigs, Alabama;

Whereas Reverend Shuttlesworth, a former truck driver who studied theology at night, was ordained in 1948;

Whereas Reverend Shuttlesworth became pastor of Bethel Baptist Church in Birmingham, Alabama, in 1953, and was an outspoken leader in the fight for racial equality;

Whereas Reverend Shuttlesworth worked alongside Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and was hailed by Dr. King for his courage and energy in the fight for civil rights;

Whereas, in May 1956, Reverend Shuttlesworth established the Alabama Christian Movement for Human Rights when the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People was banned from Alabama by court injunction;

Whereas, in a brazen attempt to threaten Reverend Shuttlesworth's resolve and commitment to the fight for equality and justice, 6 sticks of dynamite were detonated outside Reverend Shuttlesworth's bedroom window on Christmas Day, 1956;

Whereas, on the day after the attack on his home, on December 26, 1956, an undeterred Reverend Shuttlesworth courageously continued the fight for equal rights, leading 250 people in a protest of segregated buses in Birmingham;

Whereas Reverend Shuttlesworth was beaten with chains and brass knuckles by a mob of Ku Klux Klansmen in 1957 when he tried to enroll his children in a segregated school in Birmingham;

Whereas Reverend Shuttlesworth co-founded the Southern Christian Leadership Conference in 1957, serving as the first secretary of the organization from 1958 to 1970 and as its president in 2004;

Whereas Reverend Shuttlesworth participated in protesting segregated lunch counters and helped lead sit-ins in 1960;

Whereas Reverend Shuttlesworth worked with the Congress of Racial Equality to organize the Freedom Rides against segregated interstate buses in the South in 1961;

Whereas it was Reverend Shuttlesworth who called upon Attorney General Robert Kennedy to protect the Freedom Riders;

Whereas Reverend Shuttlesworth freed a group of Freedom Riders from jail and drove them to the Tennessee State line to safety;

Whereas, in 1963, Reverend Shuttlesworth persuaded Dr. King to bring the civil rights movement to Birmingham;

Whereas, in the spring of 1963, Reverend Shuttlesworth designed a mass campaign that included a series of non-violent sit-ins and marches against illegal segregation by Black children, students, clergymen, and others;

Whereas, in 1963, while leading a nonviolent protest against segregation in Birmingham, Reverend Shuttlesworth was slammed against a wall and knocked unconscious by the force of the water pressure from fire hoses turned on demonstrators at the order of Bull Connor, the Commissioner of Public Safety;

Whereas the televised images of Connor directing the use of firefighters' hoses and police dogs to attack nonviolent demonstrators, and to arrest those undeterred by violence, had a profound effect on the view of the civil rights struggle by citizens of the United States;

Whereas as a result of those violent images, President John Fitzgerald Kennedy called the fight for equality a moral issue;

Whereas those violent images helped lead to the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Public Law 88-352; 78 Stat. 241);

Whereas, in his 1963 book “Why We Can’t Wait”, Dr. King called Reverend Shuttlesworth “one of the nation’s most courageous freedom fighters . . . a wiry, energetic, and indomitable man”;

Whereas, in March 1965, Reverend Shuttlesworth helped organize the historic march from Selma to Montgomery to protest voting discrimination in Alabama;

Whereas Reverend Shuttlesworth became pastor of the Greater New Light Baptist Church in Cincinnati, Ohio, in 1966 and served as pastor until his retirement in 2006;

Whereas Reverend Shuttlesworth advocated for racial justice in Cincinnati and for increased minority representation in the public institutions of Cincinnati, including the police department and city council;

Whereas, in the 1980s, Reverend Shuttlesworth established the Shuttlesworth Housing Foundation in Cincinnati, which helped low-income families in Cincinnati become homeowners;

Whereas, in 2001, President William Jefferson Clinton awarded Reverend Shuttlesworth a Presidential Citizens Medal for his leadership in the “nonviolent civil rights movement of the 1950s and 60s, leading efforts to integrate Birmingham, Alabama’s schools, buses, and recreational facilities”;

Whereas the Birmingham international airport was named for Reverend Shuttlesworth in 2008, and is now known as the Birmingham-Shuttlesworth International Airport;

Whereas Reverend Shuttlesworth was inducted into the Ohio Civil Rights Commission Hall of Fame in 2009;

Whereas in Reverend Shuttlesworth's final sermon he said "the best thing we can do is be a servant of God . . . it does good to stand up and serve others"; and

Whereas upon the death of Reverend Shuttlesworth, President Barack Hussein Obama said of Reverend Shuttlesworth that he "dedicated his life to advancing the cause of justice for all Americans. He was a testament to the strength of the human spirit. And today we stand on his shoulders, and the shoulders of all those who marched and sat and lifted their voices to help perfect our union": Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the Senate celebrates the life and
 2 achievements of Reverend Fred Lee Shuttlesworth and
 3 honors him for his tireless efforts in the fight against seg-
 4 regation and his steadfast commitment to the civil rights
 5 of all people.

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