

111TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. CON. RES. 45

Expressing the sense of the Congress that the United States Postal Service should issue a postage stamp in commemoration of Congressman Adam Clayton Powell, Jr.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

FEBRUARY 10, 2009

Mr. RANGEL submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Expressing the sense of the Congress that the United States Postal Service should issue a postage stamp in commemoration of Congressman Adam Clayton Powell, Jr.

Whereas Adam Clayton Powell, Jr. was a Baptist minister, a crusader for civil rights, and one of the most effective legislators in the history of the United States Congress;

Whereas Adam Clayton Powell, Jr. was born on November 29, 1908, in New Haven, Connecticut, and was raised in the section of New York City known as Harlem, where his father was pastor of the Abyssinian Baptist Church, which had one of the largest congregations in the Nation;

Whereas Adam Clayton Powell, Jr. earned a bachelor's degree from Colgate University in 1930 and began his crusade for civil rights by leading a protest against Harlem

Hospital for firing 5 African-American doctors because of their race;

Whereas Adam Clayton Powell, Jr. earned a master's degree in religious education from Columbia University in 1931 and, after his father's retirement in 1937, became pastor of the Abyssinian Baptist Church, in which capacity Adam Clayton Powell, Jr., used the pulpit to spur political action;

Whereas, in 1941, Adam Clayton Powell, Jr. was elected to the New York City Council and began publishing and editing a weekly newspaper called "The People's Voice";

Whereas Adam Clayton Powell, Jr. was a member of the New York State Office of Price Administration from 1942 to 1944 and the Manhattan Civilian Defense from 1942 to 1945;

Whereas Adam Clayton Powell, Jr. was elected to the United States House of Representatives in 1944, representing the newly created 22d Congressional District of New York, which later became the 18th Congressional District of New York;

Whereas Congressman Powell served on the Committee on Indian Affairs and the Committee on Invalid Pensions and Labor during his first term, the Committee on Education and Labor beginning in 1947, and the Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs from 1955 to 1961;

Whereas Congressman Powell challenged the informal rules forbidding Black Members from using the facilities of the Capitol that were reserved exclusively for Members and admonished the notorious segregationist, John E. Rankin of Mississippi, for voicing racist epithets against Blacks on the floor of the House of Representatives;

Whereas Congressman Powell introduced several bills to outlaw lynching and poll taxes, as well as discrimination in housing, employment, transportation, and the Armed Forces;

Whereas Congressman Powell attempted to attach an amendment, which would have denied Federal funding to institutions that practiced discrimination, to so many bills that it became known as the “Powell Amendment”;

Whereas Congressman Powell campaigned ardently for Democratic Presidential nominee John F. Kennedy, garnering enough votes from African-Americans to ensure Kennedy’s narrow victory in 1960;

Whereas Congressman Powell became the first African-American to chair the powerful Committee on Education and Labor in 1961;

Whereas Chairman Powell was instrumental in passing bills that increased the minimum wage, provided education and training for the deaf, established standards for wages and hours of work, and authorized the Medicare, Medicaid, Head Start, school lunch, vocational training, and student loan programs;

Whereas Chairman Powell played a decisive role in the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as part of which the “Powell Amendment” was finally enacted;

Whereas Congressman Powell came under attack from long-time enemies and committee members and was stripped of his chairmanship by the Democratic Caucus of the House of Representatives on January 9, 1967, and was later excluded from the 90th Congress by a vote of 307 to 116 on March 1, 1967;

Whereas Congressman Powell won a special election on April 11, 1967, to fill his seat during this exclusion, but did not return to Congress until 1969, when the Supreme Court ruled that the House of Representatives had acted unconstitutionally;

Whereas Congressman Powell returned to Congress, but was stripped of his 22 years of seniority;

Whereas Congressman Powell unsuccessfully sought renomination in the June 1970 primary, retired as pastor of the Abyssinian Baptist Church in 1971, and died in Miami, Florida, on April 4, 1972; and

Whereas Congressman Powell remains one of the greatest civil rights advocates in the history of the United States: Now, therefore, be it

- 1 *Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate*
- 2 *concurring)*, That it is the sense of the Congress that—
- 3 (1) the United States Postal Service should
- 4 issue a postage stamp commemorating Congressman
- 5 Adam Clayton Powell, Jr.; and
- 6 (2) the Citizens' Stamp Advisory Committee
- 7 should recommend to the Postmaster General that
- 8 such a stamp be issued.

○