

111TH CONGRESS  
2D SESSION

# S. RES. 489

Honoring the life and achievements of Dr. Benjamin L. Hooks.

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IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

APRIL 19, 2010

Mr. ALEXANDER (for himself, Mr. BURRIS, Mr. CORKER, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. FEINGOLD, and Mr. DURBIN) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to

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## RESOLUTION

Honoring the life and achievements of Dr. Benjamin L.  
Hooks.

Whereas Benjamin Hooks was born in Memphis, Tennessee on January 31, 1925;

Whereas Benjamin Hooks died April 15, 2010, at the age of 85 in Memphis, Tennessee, and is survived by his wife, Frances Hooks, his daughter, Patricia Gray, and 2 grandsons;

Whereas Benjamin Hooks was the fifth of 7 children born to Robert B. and Bessie Hooks, and was the grandson of Julia Hooks, the second Black woman in the United States to graduate from college;

Whereas Benjamin Hooks attended LeMoyne-Owen College in Memphis and, in 1944, graduated from Howard University;

Whereas Benjamin Hooks joined the United States Army during World War II and was promoted to staff sergeant;

Whereas in 1948, Benjamin Hooks received his law degree from DePaul University in Chicago, Illinois and returned to Memphis, Tennessee to help breakdown segregation;

Whereas Benjamin Hooks set up his own law practice and was one of a few Blacks practicing law in Memphis from 1949–1965;

Whereas Benjamin Hooks was appointed to a vacancy on the Shelby County criminal court, by Governor Frank G. Clement in 1965, making him the first Black criminal court judge in the history of Tennessee;

Whereas Benjamin Hooks was a leader in the civil rights movement and joined the Southern Christian Leadership Conference of Reverend Martin Luther King in 1956;

Whereas Benjamin Hooks became the first Black appointee to the Federal Communications Commission in 1972, when he was appointed by President Richard Nixon, and, in that capacity, worked towards minority employment and involvement in broadcasting;

Whereas Benjamin Hooks was elected executive director of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) on November 6, 1976, and served in that role until 1992;

Whereas Benjamin Hooks was an ordained minister and delivered sermons for 52 years at the Greater Middle Baptist Church and as pastor at Greater New Mountain Moriah Missionary Baptist Church in Detroit;

Whereas Benjamin Hooks was honored in 1996 with the dedication of the Benjamin L. Hooks Institute for Social Change at the University of Memphis, which he helped to create;

Whereas Benjamin Hooks and Francis Hooks renewed their wedding vows on March 24, 2001, after almost 50 years of marriage;

Whereas in November 2007, Benjamin Hooks was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the highest civilian honor in the United States, by President George W. Bush; and

Whereas the passing of Benjamin Hooks is a great loss: Now, therefore, be it

1       *Resolved*, That the Senate—

2               (1) recognizes the outstanding contributions of  
3       Dr. Benjamin L. Hooks to the civil rights move-  
4       ment, the ministry, his family, and the community  
5       of Memphis, Tennessee; and

6               (2) pays tribute to Dr. Benjamin L. Hooks, his  
7       passion for life, dedication to service, and commit-  
8       ment to equality.

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