

119TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. RES. 629

Honoring the life and legacy of Reverend Jesse Louis Jackson, Sr., and commending him for his significant leadership during the Civil Rights Movement and his decades of advocacy in pursuit of justice, equality, and human rights.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MARCH 9, 2026

Mr. DURBIN (for himself, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. WARNOCK, Mr. BOOKER, and Ms. BLUNT ROCHESTER) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary

RESOLUTION

Honoring the life and legacy of Reverend Jesse Louis Jackson, Sr., and commending him for his significant leadership during the Civil Rights Movement and his decades of advocacy in pursuit of justice, equality, and human rights.

Whereas Jesse Louis Jackson, Sr., (referred to in this preamble as “Reverend Jackson”) was born as Jesse Louis Burns on October 8, 1941, in Greenville, South Carolina, to his mother Helen Burns and father Noah L. Robinson, and was later adopted by his stepfather Charles Henry Jackson;

Whereas Reverend Jackson graduated from Sterling High School in Greenville, South Carolina, in 1959 and, short-

ly thereafter, enrolled at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign before transferring to North Carolina Agricultural & Technical College in Greensboro, North Carolina, in 1960;

Whereas, in July 1960, Reverend Jackson began his civil rights activism by leading the “Greenville Eight” in a peaceful “read-in” protest at the segregated Greenville County Public Library in Greenville, South Carolina, where he and other students were arrested and taken to jail before being released on \$30 bond, leading to a lawsuit and the eventual desegregation of the library in September 1960;

Whereas, on December 31, 1962, Reverend Jackson married the love of his life, and fellow civil rights activist, Jacqueline Lavinia Brown Jackson, to whom he was married for 63 years;

Whereas Reverend Jackson leaves behind 6 children;

Whereas, in 1964, Reverend Jackson earned a bachelor’s degree from North Carolina Agricultural & Technical College in sociology;

Whereas Reverend Jackson and his wife moved to Chicago, Illinois, and he enrolled as a graduate student at the Chicago Theological Seminary;

Whereas, in 1965, Reverend Jackson went to work directly with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference;

Whereas, in 1966, Reverend Jackson was named national director of “Operation Breadbasket”, an economic development and empowerment program, with Dr. King stating that there was no one “more effective” than Reverend Jackson;

Whereas, in December 1971, in Chicago, Illinois, Reverend Jackson founded Operation PUSH (People United to Serve Humanity), an organization devoted to improving the economic condition of Black Americans, while also leading literacy programs and job placement opportunities for inner-city youth;

Whereas, in 1983, Reverend Jackson traveled to Syria to secure the release of captured United States Navy Lieutenant Robert O. Goodman Jr., and President Reagan said, “Reverend Jackson’s mission was a personal mission of mercy and he has earned our gratitude and our admiration.”;

Whereas, in 1984, Reverend Jackson founded the National Rainbow Coalition, a political organization seeking to appeal to a wide swath of Americans, including racial minorities, LGBTQ+ individuals, and the poor;

Whereas Reverend Jackson followed in the footsteps of Shirley Chisholm with his historic 1984 campaign for President, becoming the first Black candidate to win a state-wide presidential primary and delivering his famous “Rainbow Coalition” speech to the Democratic National Convention, in which he said, “Our flag is red, white and blue, but our nation is a rainbow—red, yellow, brown, black and white—and we’re all precious in God’s sight.”;

Whereas Reverend Jackson’s 1988 campaign for President, known for its iconic mantra, “Keep Hope Alive”, garnered almost 7,000,000 votes, more than double the 3,000,000 votes he received in 1984;

Whereas, in 1989, Reverend Jackson relocated to Washington, D.C., where he served as a “shadow senator” from 1991 to 1997;

Whereas, in 1997, Reverend Jackson was appointed Special Envoy for the President and the Secretary of State for the Promotion of Democracy in Africa by President Clinton, helping to reduce conflicts in Kenya, Zambia, Guinea, Sierra Leone, Nigeria, and Liberia;

Whereas, on August 9, 2000, Reverend Jackson was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom by President Clinton, with President Clinton stating that “the cause of justice has no greater co-worker than Jesse Jackson”; and

Whereas, on February 17, 2026, Reverend Jackson died, leaving a remarkable legacy of determination and ingenuity in his work to champion civil and human rights: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the Senate—

2 (1) honors the life and legacy of Jesse Louis
3 Jackson, Sr., (referred to in this resolution as “Reverend Jackson”), a distinguished American and pivotal civil rights leader who—

4 (A) dedicated his life to giving voice to the
5 voiceless; and

6 (B) pioneered countless campaigns for the
7 liberation of people across the globe;

8 (2) commends Reverend Jackson for his contributions to the United States of America and its
9 pledge to ensure “liberty and justice for all”;

10 (3) extends its deepest condolences and sympathies to the family of Reverend Jackson; and
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1 (4) requests that the Secretary of the Senate
2 transmit an enrolled copy of this resolution to the
3 family of Reverend Jackson.

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