

By: Senator(s) Jordan, Thomas, Simmons,
Butler, Walls, Jackson (11th), Horhn,
Frazier, Harden

To: Rules

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 36

1 A RESOLUTION COMMENDING THE LIFE OF ROGERS HOWARD "R.H."
2 BEARDEN, OUTSTANDING PROFESSIONAL EDUCATOR AND WORLD WAR II AND
3 KOREAN WAR VETERAN FROM TALLAHATCHIE COUNTY, MISSISSIPPI, AND
4 EXPRESSING THE SYMPATHY OF THE LEGISLATURE.

5 WHEREAS, Rogers Howard "R.H." Bearden, outstanding
6 professional educator and administrator and World War II and
7 Korean War Veteran from Sumner, Tallahatchie County, Mississippi,
8 departed this life on March 3, 2005; and

9 WHEREAS, Rogers Howard "R.H." Bearden was born March 26,
10 1918, in the Pilgrim-Blue Slough area of Sawyer Plantation near
11 Web, Mississippi. He was the oldest of eleven living children
12 born to the union of Oscar and Everlean (Moore) Bearden; and

13 WHEREAS, he joined New Pilgrim Baptist Church at ten years of
14 age, and became increasingly active in the church as he grew
15 older. He later joined the Old Antioch Baptist Church where he
16 served as Superintendent and Adult Sunday School Teacher, Church
17 Clerk, and Chairman of the Deacon Board; and

18 WHEREAS, at 16 and in the sixth grade, his parents enrolled
19 him in Johnson High School, a private school operated by the AME
20 Zion Church near Brazil, Mississippi. In the Fall of 1937, his
21 family moved to Charleston, Mississippi, where he attended
22 Tallahatchie County Training School. Here he served in a number
23 of offices including Class President and graduated as Salutatorian
24 in May 1941, at the age of 23; and

25 WHEREAS, upon completion of high school, he was drafted into
26 the Army and reported to Camp Shelby, Mississippi on July 16,
27 1941. He underwent basic training at Camp Wheeler near Macon,
28 Georgia. In March 1942, he was transferred to Camp Benning,

29 Georgia, where he joined the Officer Candidate Class and graduated
30 a Second Lieutenant of Infantry on March 29, 1942, later joining
31 Company "K" 369th, 93rd Infantry Division, Fort Huachuca, Arizona
32 in June 1942. His unit later sailed to Guadalcanal in the Solomon
33 Islands, South Pacific Theater under the command of General
34 Douglas McArthur. He also served on the Islands of Emariau, New
35 Georgia, Morotai and Mindanao in the Philippines. He commanded
36 Company "I" 369th Infantry in Mindanao as Captain where he engaged
37 in "mopping up" operations in Morotai and his unit was responsible
38 for the capture of an Ouchi General. He returned to active duty
39 in 1951 to serve during the Korean War. He was assigned to
40 Company "A" of the 102nd Infantry Regiment in Augsburg, Germany.
41 He was later transferred to the Intelligence "Order of Battle" G-2
42 section of the 43rd Infantry Division in 1952. In June 1954, he
43 was promoted to the rank of Major in the Army Reserve; and

44 WHEREAS, he returned to the states in May 1946 entering
45 Tuskegee Institute (now Tuskegee University) in June 1946 under
46 the G.I. Bill and matriculated as an Agricultural student in
47 Agronomy. He graduated from Tuskegee Institute in 1949 with a
48 Bachelor of Science Degree in Agriculture. He continued graduate
49 study at Tuskegee and received a Masters of Science Degree in
50 Agriculture in 1950, and a Masters of Education Degree in 1958.
51 While at Tuskegee, he met and married Lela W. James of Lisman,
52 Alabama, on November 13, 1948; and

53 WHEREAS, in the Fall of 1954, he became Principal of the
54 Solomon Chapel Elementary School in Phillip, Mississippi. After
55 two years, he was made Principal of Tutwiler High School, and when
56 West District High School opened with an enrollment of 1300 in
57 grades one through twelve on October 16, 1957, Bearden was its
58 first Principal. One of the most notable events in his tenure as
59 Principal was April 23, 1973, when parts of the building were
60 devastated by a strong tornado. He served at West District

61 through its many transitions until his retirement on July 1, 1982;
62 and

63 WHEREAS, his professional honors and affiliations include:
64 Personalities of the South, Twelfth Edition; Tallahatchie County
65 Retired Teachers Association; State Health Planning Advisory
66 Council; Girl Scouts of America supporter; West Tallahatchie
67 Association of Educators; Mississippi State Teachers Association;
68 R.H. Bearden Junior High School, named in July 23, 1995; Gamma Phi
69 Chapter of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity; Habitat for Humanity
70 Advisory Board; and Tallahatchie County Board of Education; and

71 WHEREAS, living to celebrate his life are: his wife of 56
72 years, Lela James Bearden; three daughters, Cynthia Bearden
73 McAdory (John Thomas) of Miami, Florida, Marilyn Bearden Robinson
74 (Lloyd) of Memphis, Tennessee and Faye Bearden Walker (Charles) of
75 New Orleans, Louisiana; grandchildren, Jocelyne Patrice McAdory,
76 Columbia, Missouri, John Bearden McAdory, Atlanta, Georgia, Donna
77 Lynette Neely, New Orleans, Louisiana, Jillian Alexandria McAdory,
78 Atlanta, Georgia, and Meredith Alicia Robinson, Memphis,
79 Tennessee; his surviving siblings, Tanzil Bearden, Charleston,
80 Mississippi, Evelyn Tensley, Detroit, Michigan, Navois Bearden,
81 Topeka, Kansas, and Bennie J. Gooden, Detroit, Michigan; and a
82 host of nieces, nephews, cousins, other relatives, students,
83 church members and friends; and

84 WHEREAS, it is with sadness that we note the passing of this
85 respected Mississippian:

86 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF
87 MISSISSIPPI, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING THEREIN, That
88 we do hereby commend the life of Rogers Howard "R.H." Bearden,
89 outstanding professional educator, administrator and World War II
90 and Korean War Veteran and extend to his surviving family the
91 sympathy of the Legislature on his passing.

92 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this resolution be presented to
93 the family of Rogers Howard "R.H." Bearden, and be made available
94 to the Capitol Press Corps.