



HR0740

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

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WHEREAS, Rev. Dr. Cordy Tindell Vivian was born in Booneville, Missouri on July 28, 1924; he and his family later moved to Macomb, where he graduated from high school in 1942; he enrolled in Western Illinois University before moving to Peoria; and

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WHEREAS, C.T. Vivian participated in his first civil rights protest in 1947, successfully desegregating Peoria's lunch counters; he began preaching in Peoria before moving to Nashville, Tennessee in 1954 to study at the American Baptist Theological Seminary; during that time, he worked with many of the leaders of the civil rights movement and took part in leading 4,000 demonstrators in a march on Nashville's City Hall; and

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WHEREAS, C.T. Vivian joined the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) in 1960, emerging as one the leaders of the Nashville sit-ins; he and other SNCC members traveled to Jackson, Mississippi to support the original Freedom Riders when they were met with violence; in 1961, he was appointed by Martin Luther King, Jr. as Director of Affiliates for the Southern Christian Leadership Council; in 1963, he helped lead the fight to desegregate Birmingham and, in 1965, he was an organizer of the voter registration drive in

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1 Selma, Alabama that became the catalyst for the 1965 Voting
2 Rights Act; and

3 WHEREAS, C.T. Vivian returned to Illinois by 1966 and began
4 helping to establish organizations to assist black children in
5 their efforts to stay in school and attend college; he also
6 worked with Jesse Jackson's Operation Breadbasket to push the
7 city and labor unions to promote affirmative action in building
8 trades; and

9 WHEREAS, After leaving Dr. King's executive staff, C.T.
10 Vivian trained ministers and developed the urban curriculum for
11 seminaries throughout the nation at the Urban Training Center
12 in Chicago; he returned to the area of seminary education as
13 the Dean of Divinity at Shaw University Divinity School, where
14 he originated and acquired funding for an unprecedented
15 national level program and the basis of his doctoral work,
16 Seminary Without Walls; and

17 WHEREAS, C.T. Vivian has served on the boards of the Center
18 for Democratic Renewal and the National Voting Rights Museum;
19 he currently serves as Board Chair of BASIC Diversity, Inc.,
20 the nation's oldest diversity consulting firm; he has provided
21 civil rights counsel to Presidents Johnson, Carter, Reagan,
22 Clinton, and Obama and he continues to lecture on racial
23 justice and democracy throughout the world; and

1 WHEREAS, In November of 2013, C.T. Vivian was awarded the
2 Presidential Medal of Freedom - the highest civilian honor from
3 the United States government; the New School for Social
4 Research named Dr. C.T. Vivian a " ... spiritual leader,
5 apostle of social justice, strategist of the civil rights
6 movement ... For decades he has been in the vanguard of the
7 struggle for racial equality in America", as they presented him
8 with one of his many honorary doctorates; he was featured
9 throughout PBS's acclaimed documentary "Eyes On The Prize"; PBS
10 later produced a full-length presentation, "The Healing
11 Ministry of the Rev. Dr. C.T. Vivian"; he is also featured as
12 both an activist and analyst in the series "People's Century"
13 and in the Tom Brokaw documentary "King"; and

14 WHEREAS, C.T. Vivian and his wife have lived in Atlanta,
15 Georgia for over 3 decades; he continues to work on behalf of
16 the needy, most recently with the victims of Hurricane Katrina;
17 he has 7 children; therefore, be it

18 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
19 NINETY-NINTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we
20 recognize the life of Rev. Dr. Cordy Tindell Vivian and declare
21 July 28, 2016 as "C.T. Vivian Day" in the State of Illinois;
22 and be it further

1 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
2 presented to C.T. Vivian as an expression of our esteem and
3 respect.