MISSISSIPPI LEGISLATURE REGULAR SESSION 2021

By: Representative Hines To: Rules

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 2

A RESOLUTION COMMENDING OMEGA PSI PHI FRATERNITY, INC., FOR ITS OUTSTANDING COMMUNITY SERVICE AND PHILANTHROPY AND DESIGNATING FEBRUARY 5, 2021, AS "OMEGA PSI PHI DAY" IN MISSISSIPPI.

WHEREAS, Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc., was the first international fraternal organization founded on the campus of a historically black college, Howard University in Washington, D.C., on November 17, 1911, by three Howard University juniors, Edgar Amos Love, Oscar James Cooper and Frank Coleman, and their faculty advisor, Dr. Ernest Everett Just, and it seeks to occupy a progressive, cooperative and constructive place in the civic and political life in communities across the nation and throughout the world; and

WHEREAS, the founders, having lived extraordinary lives, were highly educated and had distinguished careers in their chosen fields: Dr. Ernest E. Just became a world-renowned biologist, was the first recipient of the prestigious Spingarn Medal from the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) in 1915, and was the 19th honoree in the U.S. Postal Service's

Black Heritage Stamp Series on February 1, 1996; Professor Frank Coleman was a professor and head of the Physics Department at Howard University and was a United States Army Officer in World War I; Dr. Oscar J. Cooper earned a doctor of medicine degree from Howard University in 1917, and practiced medicine for over 50 years in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; and Bishop Edgar A. Love was a United States Army Chaplain in World War I and was a bishop in the Methodist Church for many years; and

WHEREAS, since its founding in 1911, Omega Psi Phi's mission has been to build a strong and effective force of men dedicated to its Cardinal Principles of Manhood, Scholarship, Perseverance and Uplift, and from the initials of the Greek phrase "friendship is essential to the soul," the name Omega Psi Phi was derived and the phrase was selected as the fraternity's motto; and over 700 chapters of this distinguished fraternity have been established in the United States and around the world since its inception, and in the great State of Mississippi, Omega Psi Phi operates 21 graduate chapters and nine undergraduate chapters; and

WHEREAS, the Omegas are tremendously involved in their communities and organize many philanthropic programs, such as the annual Achievement Week program, scholarship program, voter registration program, education and mobilization program, Talent Hunt program, National High School Essay Contest, Assault on Illiteracy program, annual Charles Drew Blood Drive, College Endowment Fund program, Domestic Abuse Awareness program,

Fatherhood Initiative program and the National Social Action program, which aims to meet the needs of African Americans in the areas of health, housing, civil rights and education; and

WHEREAS, with Alvin Jackson as the current State Representative of the fraternity in Mississippi, numerous Omega chapters in Mississippi volunteered over 3,000 hours and donated thousands of dollars to multiple projects with the purpose of uplifting and encouraging citizens of their communities to achieve higher social, economic and intellectual statuses; and

WHEREAS, since 1911, the outstanding men of Omega Psi Phi have played a vital role in our nation's illustrious history, and there are numerous remarkable and distinguished Omega men who are recognized as leaders in the arts, sciences, academics, athletics, business, civil rights, education and government at the local, national and international level; and

WHEREAS, in the mid-1930s, a group of exceptional Omega members, Robert C. Weaver, Lawrence Oxley, Roscoe Brown, Frank Horne, William Hastie, J. Arthur Weiseger, Ted Poston, Campbell C. Johnson and William Trent were appointed to the Federal Council of Negro Affairs or "Black Cabinet," which was an informal group created by President Franklin D. Roosevelt that was comprised of African-American public policy advisors whose mission was to help the country emerge out of the depression; and

WHEREAS, other fascinating Omega men in our nation's history include Charles Drew, who perfected the use of blood plasma as a

life-saving tool; Spottswood Robinson, Oliver Hill and James Nabrit, who were an integral part of the inner circle for the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund and who coordinated the court battles for racial equality, with their work culminating with the landmark decision outlawing segregated public schools in *Brown v. Board of Education*; Wiley A. Branton, who served as the principal lawyer in the civil rights case that desegregated the public schools in Little Rock, Arkansas, in 1957; and Bayard Rustin, an outstanding activist and one of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s advisors, who helped organize the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom that occurred in Washington, D.C., on August 28, 1963, where Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., delivered his legendary "I Have a Dream" speech; and

WHEREAS, numerous Omega men have been involved in various influential and note-worthy professions, including Dr. Robert C. Weaver, the first African-American person appointed to a cabinet-level position in the United States, who was appointed as the first Secretary of Housing and Urban Development in 1966; H. Carl Moultrie, who was appointed as a judge to the Superior Court of Washington, D.C.; Clifford Alexander, who was appointed Secretary of the Army in 1976; Ronald McNair, who tragically perished during the launch of the Space Shuttle Challenger on January 28, 1986; Reverend Jesse Jackson, Jr., who became a candidate for the Democratic Party presidential nomination in 1986; L. Douglas Wilder, the first African-American Governor

elected in the history of the United States, who became Virginia's 66th Governor on January 13, 1990; and David Satcher, who was appointed the 16th Surgeon General of the United States in 1998; and

WHEREAS, with its long list of exceptional members who have made tremendous contributions to the betterment of society through their extensive and outstanding community service for more than 100 years, Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc., has become a pinnacle of hope within the State of Mississippi and across the globe; and

WHEREAS, it is the policy of the House of Representatives to recognize and commend outstanding organizations such as the Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc., who have brought honor to their communities, the State of Mississippi and to the United States through their remarkable community service:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI, That we do hereby commend the Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc., for their outstanding community service and philanthropy and designate February 5, 2021, as "Omega Psi Phi Day" in Mississippi.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That copies of this resolution be furnished to the members of the Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc., and to the members of the Capitol Press Corps.