

Avenue that has meant so much to our neighborhood and the City of Philadelphia for 47 years.

From a young age, founder Paul Beale always knew he would be a florist and one day own his own flower shop. Committed to his goal Mr. Beale worked his way up and was a manager at Stein's Flower shop for 15 years. In 1970, the Senate passed a bill that increased federal assistance for the financing of small businesses. In 1971, Paul's dream to own his own shop came to fruition when he took out a loan to start a shop of his very own, Paul Beale's Florist.

Paul and his wife, Altermese, worked tirelessly to keep their business up and running. The Beales' hard work has paid off over the years, as Paul Beale's Flowers has become a true fixture on Ogontz Avenue in West Oak Lane. The small business has also become a fixture of the Beale family. Paul's daughter, Paulette Beale Harris, is now the store manager, and four generations of the Beale family work in the shop. Mr. Beale is a true role model in our City as he is a strong believer that what he earns from his shop should be invested back into the neighborhood he is proud to call home.

The 2nd Congressional District of Pennsylvania extends gratitude to Paul Beale's Flowers for its dedicated service to the City of Philadelphia and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

RECOGNIZING THE 80th BIRTHDAY
OF MR. HUBERT HOWARD COKER

HON. TRENT KELLY

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 23, 2018

Mr. KELLY of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize the 80th birthday of

Mr. Hubert Howard Coker. Mr. Coker is an outstanding citizen who demonstrates a deep devotion to God, our nation, and to his family. Mr. Coker is known for his commitment to helping his fellow man through his many roles in life, including public service.

Mr. Coker was born on March 30, 1938, to Homer and Luna Coker. He was the eighth of ten children born on the family farm in the Ryan's Well community in Itawamba County. During his early years, he demonstrated the meaning of hard work by dividing his time in the fields with school work. At the age of 15, Mr. Coker traveled to Florida, where he took a job harvesting trees from swamps to help support his family. Mr. Coker eventually returned to Itawamba County and continued his education at Itawamba Agricultural High School. In 1957, Mr. Coker married Lula Faye Newell. In 1958, Mr. Coker earned his General Equivalency Diploma (GED). He attended Northwest Alabama Junior College in Phil Campbell, Alabama, where he studied electronics.

In 1959, Mr. Coker and his family moved to Wisconsin, where he began working for the American Motors Corporation (AMC). After a brief stay, Mr. Coker and his family moved back to Itawamba County, there he began working at the True Temper Corporation in Amory, Mississippi. He would later become an employee at Mueller Brass Industries, Inc., where he embarked on a long-term mission to make sure his fellow workers received better pay and opportunities for advancement. Mr. Coker assisted in the forming of the United Steel Workers Union at Mueller Brass Industries, Inc. He later served as president of the union. Mr. Coker also established other unions throughout the south to improve wages and working conditions. From 1982–1992, Mr. Coker served as the administrator of the Industrial Union Department. He also served as

a national organizer for the International Woodworkers of America (IWA).

Mr. Coker has long been a champion of civil rights. In 1968, he took part in the Poor People's March on Washington, D.C., where participants called for a federal solution to widespread unemployment and poverty in America. Mr. Coker continued to push for civil rights reforms as a member of the NAACP and the A. Philip Randolph Institute.

Mr. Coker's desire to help others inspired him to run for public office. In 1976, he was elected to serve as an Itawamba County Justice Court Judge. He was also elected to serve as chairman of the Itawamba County Democratic Executive Committee from 1980–1984. Mr. Coker served on the Mississippi Democratic State Executive Committee from 1984–1990. One of Mr. Coker's proudest achievements was being chosen as a Mississippi delegate to the 1984 Democratic National Convention (DNC) in California, supporting presidential candidate, Walter Mondale, and the first female nominee for vice president, Geraldine Ferraro.

Mr. Coker and his wife, Carol Gray Coker, live in Fulton. They have two daughters, Patricia Digby and Angela Johnson; one son, Kenneth H. Coker; seven grandchildren; and three great-grandchildren. Mr. Coker enjoys spending time with his family, cattle farming, investing in the stock market, and staying abreast of the latest news.

Mr. Coker's love of God and America, backed by humble roots and hard work, demonstrates a spirit of true patriotism, honor, and pride in being an American. I am honored to wish him a happy 80th birthday and all the best on this special day.