

REMEMBERING GEORGE PERKINS

• Mr. VITTER. Mr. President, today I wish to honor the memory of George Perkins, a beloved community leader from Hammond, LA, who passed away suddenly in April of this year. George was born in 1942 and would have turned 71 on August 17.

George was born in Walker, LA, and relocated to Hammond in 1979. He immediately became a community leader in the Hammond area. He joined Greenfield Missionary Baptist Church where he served as a deacon, Sunday school teacher, and member of the male chorus. He cochaired the board of deacons and was in charge of the church's video recording.

George was an insurance sales representative and later a cable TV franchise owner by trade, but he was best known as one of the originators of the Tangipahoa Black Festival that began in 1984. In 1987, the name was changed to the Tangipahoa Parish Black Heritage Festival. With the new name, George and other leaders of the organization decided they needed a permanent facility and they contacted the parish school system to purchase a boarded-up school on 7.3 acres of land that was left over from integration. Over the years they have renovated the facility, which has become the Tangipahoa Parish African American Heritage Museum and Veterans Archive. George could be found there on most days working in whatever capacity in which he was needed—from acting as tour guide to researching records to taking on kitchen duty.

He also served his community in other ways. He was a member of the advisory board for North Oaks Hospital and served as the first Black councilman for District 3 in the city of Hammond. He later served as an assistant to State Representative Henry "Tank" Powell and was a founding member of the 2nd Saturday breakfast group—a group which invites members of the community to gather monthly regardless of racial and social divides to discuss issues of concern to the community. He was a member of the Masonic Order Prince Hall affiliation, the past worshipful master of Oak Grove Lodge #117 in Hammond and a grand officer of the Most Worshipful Prince Hall Lodge for the State of Louisiana.

George Perkins was a man of many talents and music was his passion. He wrote and produced many songs including "Cryin' in the Streets"—his No. 1 hit. It sold over 1 million copies and provided him the opportunity to perform at the Apollo Theater.

George will be lovingly remembered by his wife of 42 years, Eloise, 3 daughters, 3 sons, 19 grandchildren, 1 great-grandchild, 6 sisters, 2 brothers, and an entire community. I am pleased to join them in honoring George Perkins, a man who provided a great example of leadership through his service to others and his community. •

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 2:03 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bill, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 2218. An act to amend subtitle D of the Solid Waste Disposal Act to encourage recovery and beneficial use of coal combustion residuals and establish requirements for the proper management and disposal of coal combustion residuals that are protective of human health and the environment.

MEASURES READ THE FIRST TIME

The following bill was read the first time:

H.R. 2218. An act to amend subtitle D of the Solid Waste Disposal Act to encourage recovery and beneficial use of coal combustion residuals and establish requirements for the proper management and disposal of coal combustion residuals that are protective of human health and the environment.

PETITIONS AND MEMORIALS

The following petitions and memorials were laid before the Senate and were referred or ordered to lie on the table as indicated:

POM-59. A concurrent resolution adopted by the Legislature of the State of Louisiana memorializing the United States Congress to take such actions as are necessary to codify into law a United States Department of Defense standard for religious freedom that would be applied to all uniformed services; to the Committee on Armed Services.

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 175

Whereas, the freedom to practice religion and to express religious thought is acknowledged as our first freedom, enshrined in the Bill of Rights of the United States Constitution and is a freedom which belongs to all Americans; and

Whereas, our military has fought to preserve all rights and freedoms enumerated in the United States Constitution; and

Whereas, recent news reports and statements of high ranking military personnel reveal a growing intolerance and in some cases outright hostility toward religious expression and affiliation within segments of our nation's military; and

Whereas, in Section 533 of the United States National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year 2013, the United States Department of Defense is charged with developing regulations that would implement the conscience protections recently passed by the United States Congress; and

Whereas, the same protections have not been established throughout the Department of Defense for all service personnel; and

Whereas, individual branches of the military have adopted policies that are not in keeping with the spirit of Section 533 of the NDAA; and

Whereas, protection of religious freedom is fundamental to all freedoms as Americans: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby memorialize the United States Congress to take such actions as are necessary to codify into law a United States Department of Defense standard for religious freedom that would be applied to all uniformed services, ensuring that all members of the armed forces may engage in peaceable and noncombative religious speech, includ-

ing noncoercive proselytizing, and that such speech is not in derogation of the good order and discipline of the armed forces; and be it further

Resolved, That a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the presiding officers of the Senate and the House of Representatives of the Congress of the United States of America and to each member of the Louisiana congressional delegation.

POM-60. A resolution adopted by the House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts recognizing the valor and courage of the 65th Infantry Regiment, known as the Borinqueneers; to the Committee on Armed Services.

HOUSE RESOLUTION

Whereas, military heroes who served so valiantly and honorably in wars in which this country's freedom was at stake should be recognized by the people of this great nation, who should never forget the courage with which these soldiers fought; and

Whereas, in full accord with its long standing traditions, it is the sense of this legislative body to memorialize the Congress of the United States to recognize the 65th Infantry Regiment, known as the Borinqueneers, and to request that Congress bestow the Congressional Gold Medal upon these war heroes; and

Whereas, this auspicious honor, considered the most distinguished, is an award bestowed by the United States Congress and is, along with the presidential medal of freedom, the highest civilian award in the United States, given to persons who have performed an achievement that has an impact on American history and culture that is likely to be recognized as a major achievement of the Borinqueneers now and in the future; and

Whereas, as mandated by Congress in 1899, the 65th Infantry Regiment, hailing from Puerto Rico, was the only Hispanic-segregated unit ever in the United States Armed Forces that played a prominent role in American military history, having participated in three wars in which the United States was engaged, World War I, World War II, and most notably, the Korean war; and

Whereas, the Borinqueneers were willing to shed their blood, sweat and tears for democracy by enlisting in the United States Armed Forces on their own accord to defend the freedoms of others; and

Whereas, these brave men were one of the first infantrymen of the "Rock of the Marine Division. (3rd Infantry Division) to meet the enemy on the battlefields of Korea, fighting with determination and efficiency; and

Whereas, the 65th Infantry Regiment served with distinction and valor, earning two Presidential Unit Citations, Army Unit Superior Award, Navy Unit Citation, two Republic of Korea Presidential Unit Citations and Bravery Gold Medal of Greece; and

Whereas, the congressional honor would affirm that they are recognized by the people of the United States as true American heroes who served their country with distinction, fighting bravely even while enduring the hardships of segregation and discrimination; and

Whereas, the Borinqueneers are veritable American heroes and deserve to be recognized, commended, acknowledged and remembered by the people of the State of Massachusetts, as well as by all of the citizens of this great Nation: Now therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Congress of the United States hereby, respectfully memorialized by this legislative body, recognize the 65th Infantry Regiment known as the Borinqueneers, and request that these war heroes receive the Congressional Gold Medal; and be it further