

116TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. RES. 517

Honoring the life and legacy of Judge Nathaniel R. Jones.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

FEBRUARY 27, 2020

Mr. BROWN (for himself and Mr. PORTMAN) submitted the following
resolution; which was considered and agreed to

RESOLUTION

Honoring the life and legacy of Judge Nathaniel R. Jones.

Whereas Judge Nathaniel Jones was born on May 13, 1926,
in Youngstown, Ohio, and died on January 26, 2020, at
his home in Cincinnati, Ohio, surrounded by family and
loved ones;

Whereas Judge Nathaniel Jones served honorably in the
United States Army Air Corps during World War II;

Whereas Judge Nathaniel Jones attended Youngstown State
University, where he earned an undergraduate degree in
1951 and a law degree in 1955;

Whereas, in 1957, Judge Nathaniel Jones was admitted to
the Ohio Bar;

Whereas, from 1956 to 1959, Judge Nathaniel Jones served
as the Executive Director for the Fair Employment Prac-
tices Commission, where he led efforts to ensure equal

access to employment opportunities for African Americans;

Whereas, in 1962, Judge Nathaniel Jones became the first African American to be appointed as Assistant United States Attorney for the Northern District of Ohio;

Whereas, in 1967, President Lyndon B. Johnson appointed Judge Nathaniel Jones to serve as the Assistant General Counsel for the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders, also known as the Kerner Commission, which found racism as the root cause for the civil unrest that occurred in the cities of the United States during the 1960s and determined that the United States was “moving toward two societies, one black, one white—separate and unequal”;

Whereas Judge Nathaniel Jones served as the General Counsel for the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People from 1969 to 1979, directing efforts to desegregate public schools in Northern cities, defended affirmative action, and fought against discrimination against African-American soldiers in the United States Armed Forces;

Whereas, in 1979, President Jimmy Carter nominated and the Senate confirmed Judge Nathaniel Jones as a judge for the United States Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit, making him the 11th African American to serve as a Federal circuit court judge;

Whereas Judge Nathaniel Jones served on the United States Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit until his retirement in 2002;

Whereas Judge Nathaniel Jones was known as the “great dissenter” because he was often in the minority, siding

with plaintiffs seeking redress in the courts for violations of housing and employment law and civil rights protections;

Whereas Judge Nathaniel Jones assisted the Republic of South Africa in drafting a new constitution following decades of apartheid rule and served as an official election monitor for the country's first free and fair election, which ushered in the presidency of Nelson Mandela;

Whereas Judge Nathaniel Jones received 19 honorary degrees and numerous awards of distinction, such as the Spingarn Medal, the highest honor awarded by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, the International Freedom Conductor Award from the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center, the Charles Hamilton Houston Medallion of Merit from the Washington Bar Association, and the Pillar of Justice Award from the Federal Bar Association;

Whereas Judge Nathaniel Jones was inducted into the National Bar Association Hall of Fame and the Ohio Civil Rights Hall of Fame, and, in 2014, the Nathaniel R. Jones American Inn of Court was chartered in Youngstown, Ohio;

Whereas Judge Nathaniel Jones was an initiate of the Beta Pi Chapter of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity and was the 65th Laurel Wreath Laureate of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity;

Whereas, in 2003, Congress passed legislation to name the newly constructed Federal building in Youngstown, Ohio, the "Nathaniel R. Jones Federal Building and United States Courthouse";

Whereas, in 2019, the University of Cincinnati College of Law renamed its Center for Race, Gender, and Social Justice after Judge Nathaniel R. Jones to signify its “commitment to and alignment with the principles of Judge Jones’ impressive career as a champion for justice”;

Whereas Judge Nathaniel Jones devoted his life to answering “the Call” for racial justice, first sounded by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People in 1909, stating in his memoir, “[A]nswering calls for racial justice has not been confined to a specific time in the past or the history of a particular organization, but has been defined by the imperatives that guided my life. As I enter the twilight of my life, I offer this chronicle of the steps I have taken in an effort to advance the baton of justice handed to me by forebears who were much more surefooted and fearless than me in answering the Call.”;

Whereas Judge Nathaniel Jones inspired generations of lawyers who served as his law clerks, as well as the countless leaders who sought his wise counsel as they worked to address inequality in their communities; and

Whereas Judge Nathaniel Jones will be remembered for his dedication to upholding the Constitution of the United States and as a tireless advocate for justice: Now, therefore, be it

- 1 *Resolved*, That the Senate honors the life and legacy
- 2 of Judge Nathaniel R. Jones and his unwavering commit-
- 3 ment to upholding justice and civil rights.

