

By Senator Joyner

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Senate Resolution

A resolution remembering the lifelong activism of
civil rights champion Patricia Stephens Due.

WHEREAS, Patricia Stephens Due, the second of three
children born to Lottie Mae Powell Stephens and Horace Walter
Stephens, was born in Quincy on December 9, 1939, and

WHEREAS, Patricia Stephens Due was a devoted wife of 49
years to her husband and life partner in civil rights activism,
attorney John D. Due, Jr., a loving and proud mother to her
three daughters, Johnita, Tananarive, and Lydia, a doting
grandmother to five grandchildren, a treasured sister to
Priscilla Stephens Kruize and Walter Stephens, and a dutiful
stepdaughter to the late Marion H. Hamilton, and

WHEREAS, Patricia Stephens Due was a legendary civil rights
activist whose challenges to racial discrimination began at the
age of 13 when she attempted to use the "whites only" window at
a Dairy Queen and continued during her college years when she
led demonstrations to integrate lunch counters and theaters
which resulted in her repeated arrests in Tallahassee, where she
and fellow protesters were jailed for 49 days for refusing to
pay \$300 in fines, and

WHEREAS, in 1959, Patricia Stephens Due formed a local
chapter of the Congress of Racial Equality, serving a leadership
role in the organization and overseeing voter registration and
voter education activities in 10 North Florida counties, which
resulted in repeated arrests and compilation of a 400-page FBI
file documenting her civil disobedience actions, and

WHEREAS, Patricia Stevens Due was a recipient of the

18-03725A-12

20122138

30 Eleanor Roosevelt Award for Outstanding Leadership, the Gandhi
31 Award for Outstanding Work in Human Relations, the National
32 Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP)
33 Florida Freedom Award, and an honorary doctorate in humane
34 letters from her alma mater, Florida A & M University, and

35 WHEREAS, Patricia Stephens Due was a lifelong champion for
36 the rights and equality of all people with her activism for
37 integration extending to campaigns for economic and voting
38 rights, as well as supporting labor issues and other activities
39 to promote equal treatment under the law for all people, and

40 WHEREAS, Patricia Stephens Due chronicled her efforts,
41 experiences, and courage in "Freedom in the Family: A Mother-
42 Daughter Memoir of the Fight for Civil Rights," which she wrote
43 with her daughter, novelist Tananarive Due, as a memoir of the
44 early days of the civil rights movement and the strain on
45 families and emotional turmoil for children whose parents are
46 activists, and

47 WHEREAS, Patricia Stephens Due remained steadfast in her
48 campaign against social injustice throughout her life and
49 encouraged others to strive for freedom from discrimination and
50 oppression, and

51 WHEREAS, it pleased the Almighty God to take our esteemed
52 friend and civil rights heroine, Patricia Stephens Due, to His
53 heavenly home on February 7, 2012, NOW, THEREFORE,

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55 Be It Resolved by the Senate of the State of Florida:

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57 That the members of the Senate remember the lifelong
58 activism of civil rights champion Patricia Stephens Due, which

18-03725A-12

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59 was characterized by personal sacrifice to bring equality,
60 freedom, and justice to all Floridians.