

1 A RESOLUTION adjourning the Senate in honor and loving memory of the
2 incomparable Rev. Jesse Jackson, Sr.

3 WHEREAS, Rev. Jesse Jackson, Sr. was born on October 8, 1941, in Greenville,
4 South Carolina. He graduated from public schools in Greenville and then enrolled at the
5 University of Illinois on a football scholarship. He later transferred to North Carolina
6 Agricultural and Technical State University, from which he graduated in 1964; and

7 WHEREAS, Rev. Jesse Jackson, Sr. began his theological studies at Chicago
8 Theological Seminary but deferred his studies when he began working full-time in the
9 civil rights movement with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. He was ordained on June 30,
10 1968 and earned his Master of Divinity degree from the Chicago Theological Seminary
11 in 2000; and

12 WHEREAS, Rev. Jesse Jackson, Sr. began his activism as a student in the summer
13 of 1960 when he sought to desegregate the local public library in Greenville and served
14 as a leader in the sit-in movement. In 1965, he became a full-time organizer for the
15 Southern Christian Leadership Conference. He was soon appointed by Dr. Martin Luther
16 King, Jr. to direct the Operation Breadbasket program; and

17 WHEREAS, in December 1971, Rev. Jesse Jackson, Sr. founded Operation PUSH
18 (People United to Serve Humanity) in Chicago with the goals of economic empowerment
19 and expanding educational, business, and employment opportunities for the
20 disadvantaged and people of color. In 1984, he founded the National Rainbow Coalition,
21 a social justice organization based in Washington, D.C., that is devoted to political
22 empowerment, education, and changing public policy. In September 1996, the Rainbow
23 Coalition and Operation PUSH merged to form the Rainbow PUSH Coalition to continue
24 the work of both organizations; and

25 WHEREAS, Rev. Jesse Jackson, Sr.'s presidential campaigns in 1984 and 1988
26 broke new ground in United States politics. His 1984 campaign registered over one
27 million new voters, won 3.5 million votes, and helped the Democratic Party regain

1 control of the Senate in 1986. His 1988 campaign registered over two million new voters,
2 won seven million votes, and helped boost hundreds of state and local elected officials
3 into office. He won historic victories, coming in first or second in 46 of 54 primary
4 contests; and

5 WHEREAS, on November 2, 1985, Rev. Jesse Jackson, Sr. joined with Oliver
6 Tambo, Bishop Trevor Huddleston, Ken Livingston, Bernie Grant, Keith Vaz, Paul
7 Boateng, future member of parliament Diane Abbot, and others at the 120,000-strong
8 demonstration in London's Trafalgar Square to protest apartheid in South Africa and call
9 upon the South African government to free Nelson Mandela. He later met with Prime
10 Minister Margaret Thatcher, appealing to her to end Britain's support for apartheid; and

11 WHEREAS, in 1991, Rev. Jesse Jackson, Sr. was elected to serve as Senator of
12 Washington, D.C., where he advocated for statehood for the nation's capital and
13 advanced the "rainbow" agenda at the national and international levels. He continued to
14 promote voter registration and lead get-out-the-vote campaigns, believing that everyone
15 should be encouraged to be a responsible, informed, and active voter. He also
16 spearheaded major organizing tours through Appalachia, Mississippi, California, and
17 Georgia; and

18 WHEREAS, in October 1997, Rev. Jesse Jackson, Sr. was appointed by President
19 Bill Clinton and then-Secretary of State Madeleine Albright as "Special Envoy of the
20 President and Secretary of State for the Promotion of Democracy in Africa." In this
21 capacity he traveled to several countries in Africa and met with national leaders, such as
22 President Nelson Mandela of the Republic of South Africa, His Excellency Daniel T.
23 Arap Moi of Kenya, and President Frederick J.T. Chiluba of Zambia; and

24 WHEREAS, on February 16, 2003, Rev. Jesse Jackson, Sr. was the keynote speaker
25 at a rally held in London's Hyde Park with over one million people protesting the
26 expected invasion of Iraq by the United States. In August 2007, Equanomics UK invited
27 him to help launch the new organization in a historic nine-city United Kingdom tour. The

1 tour coincided with the 200th anniversary of the abolition of the Slave Trade Act in
2 Britain. At the conclusion of the tour, he joined international dignitaries at the unveiling
3 of a statue of Nelson Mandela in London's Parliament Square; and

4 WHEREAS, in January 2008, Rev. Jesse Jackson, Sr. delivered the international
5 keynote address on the life and philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi at an event in New Delhi,
6 India, marking the 50th anniversary of Gandhi's martyrdom. The global event celebrated
7 the strength of nonviolent, peaceful protest that Gandhi demonstrated in his
8 uncompromising quest for peace and justice; and

9 WHEREAS, due to his status as a highly respected and trusted world leader, Rev.
10 Jesse Jackson, Sr. acted as an international diplomat in many sensitive situations. In
11 1984, he secured the release of captured Navy Lieutenant Robert Goodman from Syria
12 and the release of 48 Cuban and Cuban-American prisoners from Cuba. He was the first
13 American to bring home citizens of the United Kingdom, France, and other countries
14 who were held as "human shields" by Saddam Hussein in Kuwait and Iraq in 1990. In
15 1999, Rev. Jesse Jackson, Sr. negotiated the release of United States soldiers held hostage
16 in Kosovo. In August 2000, he helped negotiate the release of four journalists working on
17 a documentary for Britain's BBC 4 network who were held in Liberia. Rev. Jackson
18 traveled extensively in the Middle East and Asia and was a special guest of President
19 Fernando Cardoso of Brazil in honoring Zumbi, the leader of slave revolts that led to the
20 end of slavery in Brazil; and

21 WHEREAS, Rev. Jesse Jackson, Sr. was a consistent and vigorous supporter of the
22 labor movement in the United States and around the world and walked more picket lines
23 and spoken at more labor rallies than any other national leader. He worked with unions to
24 organize workers, protect workers' rights, and mediate labor disputes. In 1996, he
25 traveled to Asia to investigate treatment of workers in the Japanese automobile industry
26 and in athletic apparel factories in Indonesia; and

27 WHEREAS, Rev. Jesse Jackson, Sr. lectured at major colleges and universities,

1 including Howard University, Yale University, Princeton University, Morehouse College,
2 Harvard University, Columbia University, Stanford University, and Hampton University;
3 and

4 WHEREAS, Rev. Jesse Jackson, Sr. was a leading advocate for a variety of public
5 policy issues, including universal health care, equal administration of justice in all
6 communities, sufficient funding for enforcement of civil rights laws, and increased
7 attention to business investment in under-served domestic communities, a theme that the
8 Clinton administration incorporated in the "New Markets Initiative." Rev. Jackson also
9 supported a broad range of policies to improve education, eliminate poverty, and remind
10 everyone that we are a "One-Big-Tent-America," with room for all and with no one left
11 in the margins. He spearheaded the campaign of "Restructure Loans, Don't Foreclose on
12 Homes," which tackled the housing and economic crises gripping the world. He also
13 visited thousands of high schools, colleges, universities, and correctional facilities
14 encouraging excellence, inspiring hope, and challenging young people to study diligently
15 and stay drug-free; and

16 WHEREAS, in his lifetime, Rev. Jesse Jackson, Sr. received more than 40 honorary
17 doctorate degrees and countless awards and honors for his work in human and civil rights
18 and nonviolent social change. In 1991, the United States Postal Service put his likeness
19 on a pictorial postal cancellation, only the second living person to receive such an honor.
20 Rev. Jackson was on the Gallup List of the Ten Most Respected Americans for many
21 years, he also received the prestigious NAACP Spingarn Award, in addition to honors
22 from hundreds of grassroots, civic, and community organizations from coast to coast; and

23 WHEREAS, Rev. Jesse Jackson, Sr. was made an Honorary Fellow of Regents Park
24 College at Oxford University in the United Kingdom in November 2007. In March 2010,
25 he received an Honorary Fellowship from Edge Hill University in Liverpool, England.
26 He was inducted into the prestigious Cambridge Union Society. In April 2010, he was
27 awarded an honorary doctorate from the University of KwaZulu-Natal in South Africa.

1 On August 9, 2000, he was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom, our nation's
2 highest civilian honor, by President Bill Clinton for his work. In 2009 he also received
3 the "Global Diversity and Inclusion Award" by British Prime Minister Gordon Brown;
4 and

5 WHEREAS, on Tuesday, February 17, 2026, Rev. Jesse Jackson, Sr. died
6 peacefully at the age of 84, surrounded by his family. He is survived by his wife,
7 Jacqueline; their children, Santita, Jesse Jr., Jonathan, Yusef, and Jacqueline; another
8 daughter, Ashley Jackson; and a several grandchildren; and

9 WHEREAS, the Jackson family stated that, "Our father was a servant leader — not
10 only to our family, but to the oppressed, the voiceless, and the overlooked around the
11 world. We shared him with the world, and in return, the world became part of our
12 extended family. His unwavering belief in justice, equality, and love uplifted millions,
13 and we ask you to honor his memory by continuing the fight for the values he lived by";

14 NOW, THEREFORE,

15 ***Be it resolved by the Senate of the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of
16 Kentucky:***

17 ➔Section 1. The Senate hereby extends its most profound sympathy upon the
18 passing of Rev. Jesse Jackson, Sr. and expresses heartfelt condolences to his family,
19 friends, and all that knew him in this time of loss.

20 ➔Section 2. When the Senate adjourns this day, it does so in honor and loving
21 memory of the incomparable Rev. Jesse Jackson, Sr.

22 ➔Section 3. The Clerk of the Senate is directed to transmit a copy of this
23 Resolution to Senator Gerald Neal.