

By: Dutton

H.R. No. 225

R E S O L U T I O N

1           WHEREAS, The 80th birthday of an esteemed Texan is indeed  
2 reason to celebrate, and on August 20, 2005, the Reverend Ernest B.  
3 McGowen, Sr., is marking this significant milestone in his life;  
4 and

5           WHEREAS, Recently retired from his tenure as pastoral  
6 minister of Wesley United Methodist Church, Reverend McGowen has  
7 also long benefited his fellow citizens through his involvement as  
8 a dedicated public servant; and

9           WHEREAS, Reverend McGowen's tenure in office began in 1975  
10 when he became the first African American to be elected to the  
11 Houston Community College and Houston Independent School District  
12 Boards of Trustees from the newly created District 2; his  
13 achievements in these roles were many and include the adoption of an  
14 observed school holiday for the birthday of Dr. Martin Luther King,  
15 Jr., the establishment of the first vocational-technical high  
16 school in the area, the inclusion of minority vendors, contractors,  
17 and professionals in the bidding process for contracts, increased  
18 wages and better working conditions for maintenance and food  
19 service employees, and the hiring and promotion of African American  
20 administrators within the district; and

21           WHEREAS, Elected to serve on the Houston City Council in  
22 1979, he distinguished himself in that capacity for the next 14  
23 years; initiatives championed by Reverend McGowen during that time  
24 include the South African Divestment Ordinance, the Minority and

1 Women Business Enterprise Ordinance, the Litter Control and Weed  
2 Abatement Ordinance, and the observance of the birthday of Dr.  
3 Martin Luther King, Jr., as a city holiday; moreover, he helped to  
4 secure pay parity for police officers and firefighters and to  
5 increase wages for sanitation workers and other city employees; and

6 WHEREAS, Reverend McGowen also served for 12 years on the  
7 Houston Galveston Area Council, becoming the organization's first  
8 elected African American president in 1993; today, he continues to  
9 give generously of his time and talents by serving on the mayor's  
10 Ministerial Council, Transition Team, and Affirmative Action  
11 Committee, as well as on the Harris County Hospital District Search  
12 Team; and

13 WHEREAS, In all his endeavors, both personal and  
14 professional, Reverend McGowen has enjoyed the love and support of  
15 his wife of 59 years, Jewell, and their three children; and

16 WHEREAS, Ernest McGowen remains an inspiration to all who  
17 know him, and his efforts in behalf of the city of Houston have  
18 earned him the lasting respect of countless individuals; at this  
19 time, it is a pleasure to join his many admirers in celebrating  
20 eight decades of a life well lived; now, therefore, be it

21 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 79th Texas  
22 Legislature, 2nd Called Session, hereby congratulate the Reverend  
23 Ernest B. McGowen, Sr., on his 80th birthday and extend to him  
24 sincere best wishes for continued happiness; and, be it further

25 RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be  
26 prepared for Reverend McGowen as an expression of high regard by the  
27 Texas House of Representatives.