

J. P. MIRANDA, MEMBER
197TH LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT

117A EAST WING,
PO BOX 202197
HARRISBURG, PENNSYLVANIA 17120-2197
PHONE: (717) 772-2004
FAX: (717) 787-7597



COMMITTEES

COMMERCE
LOCAL GOVERNMENT
VETERANS AFFAIRS & EMERGENCY
PREPAREDNESS

PA LEGISLATIVE BLACK CAUCUS,
TREASURER

House of Representatives
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
HARRISBURG

To: Members of the House of Representatives
Attn: Representative J.P. Miranda
Date: June 28, 2013
RE: **Resolution Honoring Reverend Dr. Leon H. Sullivan**

In the near future, I plan to introduce a resolution honoring the life and accomplishments of Reverend Dr. Leon H. Sullivan, especially those completed in Pennsylvania.

Leon H. Sullivan took his first active role in the civil rights movement by helping to organize a march on Washington, D.C. in the early 1940s. He became pastor of Zion Baptist Church in urban Philadelphia in 1950, eventually increasing its membership from 600 to 6,000, making it one of the largest congregations in America. In the early 1960s, Sullivan organized a boycott of all Philadelphia companies that would not hire blacks with the slogan: "Don't buy where you don't work." The boycotts worked and jobs eventually were offered to people of all races, but many did not have the necessary skills required for the openings. In 1964, he founded Opportunities Industrialization Centers (OICs), a self-help training program that has spread to 76 centers in the United States and 33 centers in 18 other countries, training more than two million people worldwide. To date, about 1.5 million people of all races have been trained in 142 centers worldwide. The boycotts and the OIC thrust Sullivan into the spotlight for the first time and he soon became the envy of other young civil rights activists, including the Revs. Jesse Jackson and Martin Luther King, Jr.

Among other accomplishments, he was named one of the nation's 100 leading citizens in 1963 by Life magazine, and in 1965 he was named West Virginian of the Year by the Sunday Gazette-Mail of Charleston. Sullivan joined the GM Board of Directors and became the first African-American appointed to the Board of Directors of a Fortune 500, as well as later receiving the Presidential Medal of Freedom. Reverend Dr. Leon H. Sullivan was given 50 honorary degrees from various colleges and universities, and filled the roles of author, organizer, builder, pastor, teacher, and activist, among many other roles, and his legacy lives on through his organizations and contributions to the world.

Please join me in honoring Reverend Dr. Leon H. Sullivan.