

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 601 Session of 2012

INTRODUCED BY WATERS, BRADFORD, BISHOP, DeLUCA, CALTAGIRONE, DALEY, DIGIROLAMO, EVERETT, FABRIZIO, FLECK, V. BROWN, GEIST, COHEN, GINGRICH, GEORGE, HESS, GOODMAN, GODSHALL, HENNESSEY, KIRKLAND, KULA, MAHONEY, LONGIETTI, MAJOR, READSHAW, MANN, MCGEEHAN, MILLARD, MIRABITO, PARKER, PASHINSKI, RAVENSTAHL, VEREB, ROEBUCK, SABATINA, SANTONI, SAYLOR, SWANGER, KORTZ AND D. COSTA, MARCH 12, 2012

INTRODUCED AS NONCONTROVERSIAL RESOLUTION UNDER RULE 35, MARCH 12, 2012

A RESOLUTION

1 Extending condolences upon the death of Donald "Don" Cornelius,
2 creator of *Soul Train*.

3 WHEREAS, The members of the House of Representatives wish to
4 express their sincere condolences to the family and friends of
5 Donald Cortez "Don" Cornelius, who passed away at 75 years of
6 age on February 1, 2012; and

7 WHEREAS, Mr. Cornelius, affectionately known as "Don," was
8 born September 27, 1936, in Chicago, Illinois, graduated in 1954
9 from DuSable High School and joined the United States Marine
10 Corps following his high school graduation; and

11 WHEREAS, Mr. Cornelius took a three-month broadcasting course
12 in 1966 and, to gain field experience, worked as a substitute
13 disc jockey and in the news department of WVON radio in Chicago;
14 and

15 WHEREAS, Mr. Cornelius transitioned to television in 1968,

1 becoming a sports anchor and host of *A Black's View of the News*
2 on WCIU and, while at WCIU, he developed a positive working
3 relationship with the station owners and pitched his idea for a
4 music television program; and

5 WHEREAS, Mr. Cornelius used \$400 of his own money to create a
6 pilot for *Soul Train*, which, inspired by the popular *American*
7 *Bandstand* television series, featured teenagers dancing to the
8 latest soul and R&B music and a performance by a musical guest;
9 and

10 WHEREAS, *Soul Train* premiered August 17, 1970, and George
11 Johnson of Johnson Products Company helped Mr. Cornelius make
12 *Soul Train* a popular national television program; and

13 WHEREAS, *Soul Train* became syndicated in 1971 and
14 Philadelphia was among the first cities to air the program; and

15 WHEREAS, Mr. Cornelius hosted the show, presenting soul, R&B,
16 rock, jazz and reggae stars to viewing audiences, and coined the
17 phrase, "Wishing you love, peace and soul," when signing off
18 each episode; and

19 WHEREAS, *Soul Train* became a staple of Saturday mornings for
20 families across the nation; and

21 WHEREAS, In 1987, Mr. Cornelius relinquished his duties as
22 host and decided to bring in guest hosts; and

23 WHEREAS, In 1995, Mr. Cornelius extended the franchise with
24 the addition of the Lady of Soul Awards, which recognize the
25 outstanding achievements of talented female artists within the
26 entertainment industry; and

27 WHEREAS, By 2005, *Soul Train* was seen in 105 cities across
28 the nation and had an estimated viewership of 85% among African-
29 American households; and

30 WHEREAS, In 2007, after 37 years on the air, *Soul Train* ended

1 its reign; and

2 WHEREAS, Following the end of *Soul Train*, Mr. Cornelius
3 developed serious health issues; and

4 WHEREAS, Mr. Cornelius will be remembered as a visionary who
5 created a musical franchise showcasing African-American music,
6 culture and style, a timeless expression of the depth of
7 African-American culture celebrated nationally and globally;
8 therefore be it

9 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives express its
10 sadness upon the passing of Donald "Don" Cornelius and offer its
11 condolences to his family and friends; and be it further

12 RESOLVED, That a copy of this resolution be transmitted to
13 the family of Donald "Don" Cornelius.