

1 STATE OF OKLAHOMA

2 1st Session of the 55th Legislature (2015)

3 SENATE

4 RESOLUTION 36

By: Pittman, Holt, and Matthews

5
6 AS INTRODUCED

7 A Resolution recognizing Senator E. Melvin Porter;
8 commending his accomplishments and legacy as
9 Oklahoma's first African American State Senator; and
10 directing distribution.

11 WHEREAS, Senator E. Melvin Porter was born in Okmulgee on May
12 22, 1930, and served his country in the United States Army; and

13 WHEREAS, in 1956 Senator Porter became part of the first class
14 at the Vanderbilt University Law School in Tennessee to include
15 African American students; and

16 WHEREAS, in 1961 Senator Porter became President of the Oklahoma
17 City chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of
18 Colored People, during a critical period in our nation's civil
19 rights history; and

20 WHEREAS, redistricting in 1964 reflected change in population
21 for the first time, thus creating new Senate seats; and

22 WHEREAS, Senator Porter, who had previously run for the House in
23 1962 as a Republican, was elected as a Democrat to represent Senate
24 District 48 on November 3, 1964, winning 85 percent of the vote; and

1 WHEREAS, Senator Porter was sworn in on November 18, 1964, and
2 in the 1965 Legislative Session served as the first African American
3 member of the Oklahoma Senate; and

4 WHEREAS, Senator Porter spent his first 18 years in the Oklahoma
5 Senate as its sole African American member; and since that time,
6 nine more African American Oklahomans have become members of the
7 Senate, including from Senate District 48, Senators Vicki Miles-
8 LaGrange, Angela Z. Monson, Constance N. Johnson, and Anastasia A.
9 Pittman. Senators Bernard McIntyre, Maxine Horner, Judy Eason
10 McIntyre, Jabar Shumate, and Kevin Matthews have served in District
11 11; and

12 WHEREAS, Senator Porter spent 22 years in the Oklahoma Senate,
13 serving from 1964 to 1986.

14 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE 1ST SESSION
15 OF THE 55TH OKLAHOMA LEGISLATURE:

16 THAT upon the occasion of the 50th anniversary of Senator E.
17 Melvin Porter becoming its first African American member, the
18 Oklahoma State Senate recognizes Senator Porter's trailblazing
19 accomplishments and commends his work in public service.

20 THAT a copy of this resolution be distributed to Senator E.
21 Melvin Porter and his family.

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