

House Resolution 198

By: Representatives Bruce of the 61st, Fludd of the 64th, Alexander of the 66th, Thomas of the 56th, Brooks of the 55th, and others

A RESOLUTION

1 Commending Willie Bolden on the active role he played in the Civil Rights Movement and
2 inviting him to be recognized by the House of Representatives; and for other purposes.

3 WHEREAS, Willie Bolden experienced racism from an early age: he was not able to try on
4 clothes at the store and had to sit outside to eat his ice cream at the Five and Dime store; and

5 WHEREAS, after high school, he joined the United States Marine Corps and went back
6 home to Savannah where he supported himself through his job at the Mango Hotel and the
7 money he made playing pool; and

8 WHEREAS, it was in a pool hall that Willie first met Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., who was
9 escorted by Josea Williams, and in that meeting, Dr. King tried to convince Willie to divert
10 his energy from playing pool to fighting for equal rights and invited him to come to Atlanta
11 to talk further; and

12 WHEREAS, it was in this Atlanta meeting that Dr. King showed Willie the Bible and a book
13 written by Mahatma Gandhi and explained to Willie that they were going to turn the country
14 from upside down to right side up with those two books; he asked Willie to stand beside him;
15 and

16 WHEREAS, Willie began to work with Dr. King and worked in every major Civil Rights
17 Movement across the country, including Selma, Alabama, and St. Augustine, Florida, which
18 was the bloodiest movement of the entire 1960s; and

19 WHEREAS, Willie was in charge of bringing the Mule Train from Marx, Mississippi, to
20 Washington, D.C., for the Poor People Campaign, and he organized 16 wagons and 50,000
21 people for the 500 mile journey; and

22 WHEREAS, Willie was inducted into the International Civil Rights Hall of Fame in 2012
23 and received the Humanitarian Award on July 19, 2014; and

24 WHEREAS, Willie is now an associate minister at Bethlehem Baptist Church but continues
25 speaking at events, and he went to Ferguson, Mississippi, with Bernice King to teach
26 nonviolence; and

27 WHEREAS, Willie Bolden was a leader in the paradigm-shattering Civil Rights Movement
28 of the 1960s and remains staunchly committed today to the morals and values that were at
29 the core of the movement.

30 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES that
31 the members of this body commend Willie Bolden on the active role he played in the Civil
32 Rights Movement and the work that he has performed to make this world a better place for
33 generations to come and invite him to be recognized by the House of Representatives at a
34 date and time to be fixed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives.

35 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Clerk of the House of Representatives is authorized
36 and directed to make appropriate copies of this resolution available for distribution to Willie
37 Bolden.