

Senate Resolution 1346

By: Senators Davenport of the 44th, Fort of the 39th, Seay of the 34th, Reed of the 35th, Tate of the 38th and others

A RESOLUTION

1 Honoring the life of Reverend E. Randel T. Osburn; and for other purposes.

2 WHEREAS, for more than 35 years, Reverend E. Randel T. Osburn devoted his life to the
3 pursuit of civil rights as a veteran of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC),
4 the organization co-founded by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.; and

5 WHEREAS, Reverend Osburn served under all six SCLC presidents – Dr. Martin Luther
6 King, Jr., Reverend Ralph D. Abernathy, Reverend Joseph Lowery, Honorable Martin Luther
7 King, III, Reverend Fred Shuttlesworth, and Honorable Charles Steele, Jr.; and

8 WHEREAS, he served the SCLC in various capacities including national vice president and
9 executive vice president/chief operating officer, and he was also executive director of the
10 SCL Foundation, Inc.; and

11 WHEREAS, at the age of 17, Reverend Osburn was the youngest minister appointed by Dr.
12 Martin Luther King, Jr., to serve on his original field staff; in the early 1960's, he was a
13 leader of the student sit-in movement and was arrested and jailed 75 times; he was one of the
14 first and one of the few black leaders to move into the forefront of the 1960's anti-war
15 movement resulting in his arrest for protesting the war in Vietnam as early as 1965; and
16 during his early years, he served as the director of SCLC's Operation Breadbasket in Ohio;
17 and

18 WHEREAS, as executive director of the SCLC, he was a tireless champion for continuing
19 the work of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., helping to organize the Freedom Trains which
20 taught thousands of students across the country "Kingian Nonviolence" and the principles
21 of conflict resolution; co-sponsored hundreds of programs to help the youth in our country;
22 was the primary coordinator for the National SCLC Conventions; and was the architect of
23 many of the programs, initiatives, and projects of the SCLC and the Civil Rights Movement,

1 including the Stop the Killing-End the Violence Program, and the Gun Buy-Back Campaign
2 that removed over 10,000 guns off the streets; and

3 WHEREAS, throughout his tenure of more than three decades, Reverend Osburn was a
4 staunch advocate for women's rights, the rights of workers, economic empowerment, and
5 prison reform, and he can be credited with providing leadership that led to many of the
6 political gains in this country and insisted on teaching voter empowerment, voter registration,
7 and voter education; and

8 WHEREAS, he was one of the key national organizers for the Million Man March, served
9 as advisor and confidant to many in the Civil Rights Movement, including Mrs. Coretta Scott
10 King, Mrs. Rosa Parks, Martin Luther King, III, and Mr. Dick Gregory, and his leadership
11 brought about many international liaisons, including Prince Abdullah, the Crown Prince of
12 Saudi Arabia, South African President Nelson Mandela, and leaders involved in the
13 Tiananmen Square Demonstrations for Human Rights in China; and

14 WHEREAS, in the tradition of great preachers, Reverend Osburn has mesmerized audiences
15 with his soul-searching message of nonviolence, peace, and activism at over 1,200 colleges,
16 700 churches, and over 2,500 other groups, and the number of awards, certificates, and other
17 honors from around the world would number in the thousands; and

18 WHEREAS, he is one of the few who have actually "walked the walk" as a living pioneer
19 and warrior in the causes of peace and human rights, knew first-hand the real legacy of Dr.
20 Martin Luther King, Jr., and continued to remain faithful and committed to living that legacy.

21 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE that the members of this body
22 join together to honor the life of Reverend E. Randel T. Osburn for his exemplary service to
23 his community, the state, and the nation, and express their most sincere condolences to his
24 family and friends.

25 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Secretary of the Senate is hereby authorized and
26 directed to transmit an appropriate copy of this resolution to the family of Reverend E.
27 Randel T. Osburn.