

House Resolution 87

By: Representatives Brooks of the 63rd and Benfield of the 85th

A RESOLUTION

- 1 Honoring the life and memory of Mr. Charles Morgan, Jr.; and for other purposes.
- 2 WHEREAS, the State of Georgia mourns the passing of one of its finest citizens and nation's
3 leading civil rights lawyers, Mr. Charles Morgan, Jr., on January 8, 2009; and
- 4 WHEREAS, born on March 11, 1930, in Cincinnati, Ohio, Mr. Morgan earned his law
5 degree from the University of Alabama; and
- 6 WHEREAS, this fearless defender of equal rights was most famous for his win in the
7 landmark 1960's lawsuit that helped establish the one-person-one-vote rule, giving blacks
8 more equitable representation in legislative districts; and
- 9 WHEREAS, a fervent believer in obtaining civil rights through the court system, Mr. Morgan
10 took on many legal battles to obtain justice, including suing his alma mater to desegregate;
11 and
- 12 WHEREAS, Mr. Morgan had other notable civil rights cases such as his successful
13 challenges of the practice of racially segregated juries and prisons and of the results for a
14 Greene County, Alabama, election, which forced a new election and led to the election of six
15 black candidates for local office; and
- 16 WHEREAS, a bold and colorful man, Mr. Morgan gained attention in 1963, when he gave
17 a speech blaming the pillars of the Birmingham community for a local Ku Klux Klan
18 bombing that killed four black girls at Sunday school because these leaders refused to take
19 responsibility for the pervasive racial hatred in the city; and
- 20 WHEREAS, Mr. Morgan's fiery accusations led to death threats against him and his family,
21 and in 1964 he moved to Atlanta, Georgia, to become the Southern director of the American
22 Civil Liberties Union (ACLU); and

23 WHEREAS, during his tenure with the ACLU, Mr. Morgan fought many high profile cases
24 involving protests against the Vietnam War, including representing Muhammad Ali in his
25 fight to avoid being drafted, an officer court-martialed for his refusal to instruct Green Berets
26 headed to Vietnam, and the civil rights activist Julian Bond when he was denied a seat in the
27 Georgia legislature because of his antiwar views; and

28 WHEREAS, Mr. Morgan severed his affiliation with the ACLU in 1976 after he was
29 reprimanded by the organization when an article in *The New York Times* reported on an
30 encounter involving Mr. Morgan in which he accused a man of bigotry after the man stated
31 he would not vote for Jimmy Carter due to his Southern accent; and

32 WHEREAS, this self-proclaimed proud son of the South spent the remainder of his legal
33 career in private practice, representing large corporations against what he portrayed as
34 government efforts to abridge their rights; and

35 WHEREAS, Mr. Morgan's surviving family includes his wife Camille, his son Charles
36 Morgan III, and four grandchildren; and

37 WHEREAS, this talented legal mind and champion of civil rights will long be remembered
38 by his many clients, friends, and neighbors whose lives he influenced.

39 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES that
40 this body hereby joins in honoring the life and memory of Mr. Charles Morgan, Jr., and
41 commending his many great achievements.

42 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Clerk of the House of Representatives is authorized
43 and directed to transmit an appropriate copy of this resolution to the family of Mr. Charles
44 Morgan, Jr.