

House Resolution 178

By: Representatives Cannon of the 58th, Drenner of the 85th, Barnes of the 86th, Park of the 107th, and Carter of the 93rd

A RESOLUTION

- 1 Honoring the life and memory of Antonio Cornelius Baker; and for other purposes.
- 2 WHEREAS, the State of Georgia mourns the loss of one of its most distinguished citizens
- 3 with the passing of Antonio Cornelius Baker on November 8, 2024; and
- 4 WHEREAS, born on September 30, 1961, Antonio Cornelius Baker was a distinguished
- 5 public health advocate and policy expert whose career was dedicated to HIV/AIDS
- 6 prevention, care, and advocacy; and
- 7 WHEREAS, he spent part of his early childhood in Apopka, Florida, before moving to
- 8 Syracuse, New York, where he was raised by his mother, Shirley Baker, a social worker and
- 9 family services coordinator; and
- 10 WHEREAS, in 1983, he began his professional career as an arts editor for *Washington City*
- 11 *Paper* and became involved in LGBTQ+ advocacy and fundraising for community
- 12 organizations such as Brother, Help Thyself; and

13 WHEREAS, he served as an executive assistant to D.C. City Council Member Carol
14 Schwartz in 1985, during which time he developed the skills that would serve as the
15 foundation for his future leadership in health advocacy; and

16 WHEREAS, diagnosed as HIV-positive during the early years of the AIDS epidemic, he
17 dedicated innumerable hours of his time and energy toward advocating for those affected by
18 the disease; and

19 WHEREAS, he joined the White House Presidential Personnel Office in 1989 under
20 President George H. W. Bush and later served as Confidential Assistant to the Assistant
21 Secretary for Health at the United States Department of Health and Human Services from
22 1989 to 1992; and

23 WHEREAS, Antonio Cornelius Baker played a pivotal role in the National Association of
24 People with AIDS, where he served as policy director and later as executive director, leading
25 efforts to establish National HIV Testing Day on June 27 to promote routine testing and
26 reduce stigma; and

27 WHEREAS, from 1999 to 2004, he served as executive director of the Whitman-Walker
28 Clinic, where he worked to expand access to HIV/AIDS care while addressing the clinic's
29 financial challenges; and

30 WHEREAS, his later contributions included serving as an adviser to the National Black Gay
31 Men's Advocacy Coalition and contributing to PEPFAR initiatives to combat the global
32 HIV/AIDS epidemic; and

33 WHEREAS, he further collaborated with the National Institutes of Health's Office of AIDS
34 Research, participated in the Presidential Advisory Council on HIV/AIDS, and held board
35 positions with Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS and the Elizabeth Taylor AIDS
36 Foundation; and

37 WHEREAS, he was united in companionship with Gregory Nevins, a senior counsel at
38 Lambda Legal, with whom he shared a 20-year-long bond of love; and

39 WHEREAS, a compassionate and generous man, Antonio Cornelius Baker will long be
40 remembered for his love of family, friendship, and community and will be missed by all who
41 had the great fortune of knowing him.

42 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES that
43 the members of this body join in honoring the life and memory of Antonio Cornelius Baker
44 and express their deepest and most sincere regret at his passing.

45 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Clerk of the House of Representatives is authorized
46 and directed to make an appropriate copy of this resolution available for distribution to the
47 family of Antonio Cornelius Baker.