

EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 167

WHEREAS, Representative John Lewis was born John Robert Lewis on February 21, 1940 in Troy, Alabama, as the son of two sharecroppers; and

WHEREAS, Representative Lewis graduated from the American Baptist Theological Seminary in Nashville and received a Bachelor's degree in Religion and Philosophy from Fisk University; and

WHEREAS, Representative Lewis became heavily involved in the civil rights movement as a student, organizing sit-ins at segregated lunch counters, bus boycotts, and other nonviolent protests, and was arrested and jailed many times for his efforts; and

WHEREAS, in 1961, Representative Lewis became one of the 13 original Freedom Riders, both black and white, who were determined to ride together from Washington, D.C. to New Orleans to pressure the federal government to enforce the U.S. Supreme Court's decision that segregated interstate bus travel was unconstitutional; and

WHEREAS, Representative Lewis and his fellow Freedom Riders were repeatedly beaten and assaulted by racist mobs in states throughout the South, but were not deterred; and

WHEREAS, in 1963, Representative Lewis was elected as chairman of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), which he had helped found, and served as chairman until 1966; and

WHEREAS, while chairman of the SNCC, Representative Lewis was one of the six leaders who organized the March on Washington in 1963, where Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. delivered his famous "I Have a Dream" speech, and Representative Lewis was the youngest speaker at the March on Washington, at age 23; and

WHEREAS, Representative Lewis coordinated SNCC's efforts for the Freedom Summer in Mississippi, where college students from around the country traveled to Mississippi to help African-Americans register to vote; and

WHEREAS, on March 7, 1965, which became known as "Bloody Sunday", Representative Lewis led over 600 marchers in a peaceful march across the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma, Alabama, where they were met by Alabama State Troopers, who discharged tear gas and brutally beat many of the marchers with night sticks; and

WHEREAS, Representative Lewis was beaten so badly that his skull was fractured, but he managed to escape the assault, and even before going to the hospital, appeared on national television to call on President Lyndon Johnson to intervene; and

WHEREAS, Representative Lewis would bear physical scars on his head from that day for the rest of his life; and

WHEREAS, Representative Lewis went on to serve as associate director of the Field Foundation in New York City, director of the Southern Regional Council's Community Organization Project, and director of the Voter Education Project; and

WHEREAS, Representative Lewis served in President Jimmy Carter's administration as associate director of ACTION, which was described as "the federal domestic volunteer agency"; and

WHEREAS, in 1981, Representative Lewis was elected to an at-large seat on the Atlanta City Council, and served in that role until 1986; and

WHEREAS, in 1986, Representative Lewis was elected to represent Georgia's Fifth Congressional District in the U.S. House of Representatives, and was re-elected 16 times, serving nearly 34 years in Congress; and

WHEREAS, during his time in Congress, Representative Lewis was a leading voice for racial justice, LGBTQ rights, national health insurance, comprehensive immigration reform, and gun safety; and

WHEREAS, Representative Lewis voted against and fiercely opposed the war in Iraq that was launched in 2003, and was repeatedly arrested for protesting the genocide in Darfur at the Sudanese embassy; and

WHEREAS, in 1988, Representative Lewis introduced a bill to create a national African-American museum in Washington, D.C.,

which was blocked for fifteen years, largely due to opposition in the Senate from Southern senators; and

WHEREAS, Representative Lewis continued to fight for the creation of such a museum, and in 2003, his bill was finally passed and signed into law, and the National Museum of African-American History and Culture opened on September 25, 2016; and

WHEREAS, Representative Lewis's autobiography *Walking with the Wind: A Memoir of the Movement*, was widely acclaimed and won numerous awards, including the Robert F. Kennedy Book Award; and

WHEREAS, Representative Lewis has received numerous awards for his courage, heroism, and leadership, including the Profile in Courage Award from the John F. Kennedy Library Foundation and the Springarn Medal from the NAACP; and

WHEREAS, Representative Lewis was the only living speaker from the March on Washington to be present on stage during Barack Obama's inauguration as the first African-American President, and in 2011, President Obama awarded Representative Lewis the Presidential Medal of Freedom; and

WHEREAS, Representative Lewis married Lillian Miles in 1968, and the two had a son, John-Miles, and remained married until Lillian's death in December 2012; and

WHEREAS, Representative Lewis passed away on July 17, 2020, at the age of 80, from pancreatic cancer; and

WHEREAS, as a towering figure of the civil rights movement, Representative Lewis forever changed America, as his work led to the establishment of civil rights and voting rights for millions of Americans who had been deprived of these basic liberties for centuries; and

WHEREAS, through his commitment, bravery, and sacrifice, Representative Lewis bent the arc of justice and pushed America closer to the ideals of equality and justice that are expressed in our Founding documents, but are not a reality for many Americans to this very day; and

WHEREAS, Representative Lewis continued his fight for economic, social, and racial justice for over three decades in the halls of Congress, as he recognized that the fight for dignity and human rights did not end in the 1960s and now must be carried on by every one of us; and

WHEREAS, Representative Lewis will be sorely missed by his son, John-Miles, his family, his friends, and a country that will forever be in his debt;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, PHILIP D. MURPHY, Governor of the State of New Jersey, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and by the Statutes of this State, do hereby ORDER and DIRECT:

1. The flag of the United States of America and the flag of New Jersey shall be flown at half-staff at all State departments, offices, agencies, and instrumentalities during appropriate hours from Saturday, July 18, 2020, through the day of Representative Lewis's interment, in recognition and mourning of an American hero, Representative John Lewis.

2. This Order shall take effect immediately.

GIVEN, under my hand and seal this
18th day of July,
Two Thousand and Twenty, and
of the Independence of the
United States, the Two
Hundred and Forty-Fifth.

[seal]

/s/ Philip D. Murphy

Governor

Attest:

/s/ Matthew J. Platkin

Chief Counsel to the Governor