

117TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. RES. 365

Honoring the life, legacy, and achievements of MacNolia Cox.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

SEPTEMBER 15, 2021

Mr. BROWN (for himself and Mr. PORTMAN) submitted the following
resolution; which was considered and agreed to

RESOLUTION

Honoring the life, legacy, and achievements of MacNolia
Cox.

Whereas MacNolia Cox (Montiere) was born on January 12,
1923, in Kenmore, Ohio, to her parents John Thomas
Cox and Alberta (Evans) Key, and raised in Akron, Ohio;

Whereas MacNolia was a member of Livingston Baptist
Church and, as a child, enjoyed reading the dictionary
from A to Z to learn the definitions and spellings of
words;

Whereas, in 1936, at the age of 13, MacNolia won the Akron
Spelling Bee at the Akron Armory over the course of 2.5
hours, besting 50 other participants and becoming the
first Black participant to win the competition;

Whereas MacNolia won the Akron Spelling Bee with the word
“voluble” in front of 3,000 people, taking home a \$25

prize and a ticket to Washington, D.C., to compete in the Scripps National Spelling Bee;

Whereas, upon arriving in Washington, D.C., MacNolia was forced to stay in a segregated hotel and was not permitted sit with the other participants during the competition;

Whereas, during the competition, MacNolia was asked to spell the word “nemesis”, which at the time was capitalized and therefore barred from the competition;

Whereas the use of this word in the competition was immediately protested by a Beacon Journal reporter, and despite learning 100,000 approved words, MacNolia misspelled the word and finished the competition fifth overall, taking home a \$75 prize;

Whereas, upon her return to Akron, MacNolia was greeted by a parade of hundreds of cars of community members, where local dignitaries made speeches on behalf of her success;

Whereas MacNolia went on to work as a domestic employee for a local doctor; and

Whereas MacNolia Cox Montiere died of cancer on September 12, 1976, at the age of 53, and was survived by her husband John, stepson Nelson Montiere, stepdaughter Joan Montiere Tabler, brother Otis Cox, sisters Orabell Finney, Rosa Lee Jackson, and Ollie Davis, and 1 granddaughter: Now, therefore, be it

- 1 *Resolved*, That the Senate honors the life, legacy, and
- 2 achievements of MacNolia Cox, an inspiration for young
- 3 students of color today.

