COMMONWEALTH OF KENTUCKY

2026 Regular Session
Senate Resolution No. 277
Tuesday, April 14, 2026

Senator Lindsey Tichenor introduced the following resolution which was ordered to be printed.

A Resolution honoring the life and legacy of Reverend Alfred Daniel "A.D." King.

***Whereas**, although Alfred Daniel King, called "A.D." by family and friends, lived in the shadows of his famous brother, Martin Luther King, Jr., he was a devoted minister, civil rights leader, and courageous advocate for justice whose work profoundly impacted the Commonwealth of Kentucky and the United States; and*

***Whereas**, Alfred Daniel Williams King was born on July 30, 1930, in Atlanta, Georgia. A.D. was the third child of Alberta Williams King and Martin Luther King, Sr. A.D. married on June 17, 1950, to Naomi Barber, with whom he had five children: Alfred Daniel, Jr., Alveda, Vernon, Derek, and Darlene; and*

***Whereas**, as a youth A.D. King strongly resisted his father's ministerial urgings, but he eventually began assisting his father at Ebenezer Baptist Church. In 1959, A.D. graduated from Morehouse College, and that same year he left Ebenezer to become pastor of Mount Vernon First Baptist Church in Newnan, Georgia; and*

***Whereas**, A.D. King was a participant in the African American freedom struggle, often appearing at his brother's side in movements in Atlanta and Birmingham during the fight for civil rights. A.D. King was arrested with his brother Martin Luther King, Jr., and 70 others while participating in an October 1960 lunch counter sit-in in Atlanta; and*

***Whereas**, in 1963, A.D. King became a leader of the Birmingham Campaign while pastoring at First Street Baptist Church in nearby Ensley, Alabama. On May 11, 1963, A.D. King's house was bombed. In August of that year, after a bomb exploded at the home of a prominent black lawyer in downtown Birmingham, thousands of outraged citizens poured into the city streets intent on revenge; and*

***Whereas**, as rocks were thrown at gathering policemen and the situation escalated, A.D. King climbed on top of a parked car and shouted to the rioters in an attempt to quell their fury, "My friends, we have had enough problems tonight. If you're going to kill someone, then kill me....Stand up for your rights, but with nonviolence"; and*

***Whereas**, in 1965, A.D. King moved to Louisville, Kentucky, where he became pastor at Zion Baptist Church (1965-1968). It became the largest African American Baptist church in Kentucky. A.D. King also founded the Kentucky Christian Leadership Council and assisted in the organization of the Committee for Open Housing's nightly marches in Louisville; and*

***Whereas**, on August 26, 1968, A.D. King's side office at Zion Baptist Church in Louisville, Kentucky, was bombed; and*

***Whereas**, like his brother, A.D. King was a staunch believer in the importance of maintaining nonviolence in direct action campaigns. However, unlike his brother, A.D. was able to remain mostly outside of the media spotlight. As one of his associates said, "Not being in the limelight never seemed to affect him but because he stayed in the background, many people never knew that he was deeply involved, too"; and*

***Whereas**, after the assassination of his brother Martin Luther King, Jr., in April 1968, there was speculation that A.D. might become president of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC). A.D., however, made no effort to assume his brother's role, although he did continue to be active in the Poor People's Campaign and in other work on behalf of SCLC. Following the death of Martin Luther King, Jr., A.D. King returned to Ebenezer Baptist Church and, in September 1968, was installed as co-pastor; and*

***Whereas**, praised by his father as "an able preacher, a concerned, loving pastor," A.D. King's life was tragically cut short when he drowned on July 21, 1969, at the age of 38. As he was a strong swimmer, the family had suspicion around his untimely drowning though no other cause of death was investigated; and*

***Whereas**, A.D. King gave inspiration to many through his high ideals, morals, and deep concern for his fellow citizens, and the devotion, patience, and understanding he demonstrated to his family and friends were admired by others; and*

***Whereas**, A.D. King was a person of magnanimous strengths with an unimpeachable reputation for integrity, intelligence, fairness, and kindness, and by the example he made of his life, he made this world a better place in which to live; and*

***Whereas**, a compassionate and generous man, Reverend Alfred Daniel "A.D." King continues to be missed by all who had the great fortune of knowing him;*

Now, Therefore,

Be it resolved by the Senate of the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Kentucky:

Section 1. The members of the Senate hereby honor the life and legacy of Reverend Alfred Daniel "A.D." King.

Section 2. When the Senate adjourns this day, it does so in honor and memory of Reverend Alfred Daniel "A.D." King.

Section 3. The Clerk of the Senate is directed to transmit a copy of this Resolution to Senator Lindsey Tichenor for presentation.