

State of Louisiana



EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT

EXECUTIVE ORDER NUMBER JBE 2020 – 16

FLAGS AT HALF-STAFF – UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVE JOHN LEWIS

- WHEREAS,** the Honorable John Robert Lewis, a Representative to the United States House of Representatives for Georgia’s 5th Congressional District, and a pioneer in the Civil Rights Movement, died at the age of 80, on Friday, July 17, 2020;
- WHEREAS,** John Robert Lewis was born in Troy, Alabama, on February 21, 1940, the son of rural sharecroppers; he grew up on his family’s farm and attended segregated public schools in Pike County, Alabama;
- WHEREAS,** as a young boy, he was inspired by the activism surrounding the Montgomery Bus Boycott and the words of the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., which he heard on radio broadcasts; in those pivotal moments, he decided to become a part of the Civil Rights Movement;
- WHEREAS,** he graduated from the American Baptist Theological Seminary in Nashville, Tennessee, and then received a bachelor’s degree in religion and philosophy from Fisk University;
- WHEREAS,** Representative Lewis became one of the 13 original Freedom Riders in 1961, and in 1963, at the age of 23, he became Chairman of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), which he had helped form;
- WHEREAS,** during the height of the Civil Rights Movement, John Lewis was a nationally recognized leader, dubbed one of the Big Six leaders of the Civil Rights Movement in 1963; and he was the youngest persons to deliver a keynote speech at the March on Washington that summer, alongside fellow Civil Rights luminaries A. Philip Randolph, Bayard Rustin, and the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.;
- WHEREAS,** in 1965, John Lewis led over 600 peaceful, orderly protestors across the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma, Alabama; the marchers were attacked by Alabama state troopers in a brutal confrontation that became known as “Bloody Sunday;” news broadcasts and photographs revealing the senseless cruelty of the segregated South helped hasten the passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965;
- WHEREAS,** John Lewis was elected to the United States House of Representatives in November, 1986, and served as U.S. Representative for Georgia’s Fifth Congressional District for thirty-four years;
- WHEREAS,** the recipient of numerous awards from eminent national and international institutions, he continued his legacy of leadership in the U.S. Congress as Senior Chief Deputy Whip for the Democratic Party in the House, and as a member of the powerful House Ways & Means Committee, and a member

on its subcommittee on Income Security and Family Support, and Ranking Member of its Subcommittee on Oversight;

WHEREAS, John Lewis is an icon of the American Civil Rights Movement and dedicated his life to protecting human rights, securing civil liberties, and building what he called “The Beloved Community” in America, poignantly having stated, “When we see something that’s not right, or not just, we have a moral obligation to speak up and speak out to do something about it;” and

WHEREAS, Representative John Lewis lived his life with integrity and honor, setting an example for all with his passionate and tireless activism and public service, and he will long be remembered by the people of Louisiana, and of these United States, and further across the world.

NOW THEREFORE, I, JOHN BEL EDWARDS, Governor of the State of Louisiana, by virtue of the authority vested by the Constitution and laws of the State of Louisiana, do hereby order and direct as follows:

SECTION 1: As an expression of respect for John Lewis, the flags of the United States and the State of Louisiana shall be flown at half-staff over the State Capitol until sunset on Monday, July 20, 2020.

SECTION 2: This Order is effective upon signature and shall remain in effect until sunset, Monday, July 20, 2020.



IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have set my hand officially and caused to be affixed the Great Seal of Louisiana in the City of Baton Rouge, on this 18th day of July, 2020.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Bel Edwards".

GOVERNOR OF LOUISIANA

**ATTEST BY THE
SECRETARY OF STATE**

SECRETARY OF STATE