



**EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT**

**EXECUTIVE ORDER NUMBER JBE 2019 – 21**

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***FLAGS AT HALF-STAFF – DR. C.O. SIMPKINS, SR.***

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- WHEREAS,** Dr. Cuthbert Ormond Simpkins, Sr., a former member of the Louisiana Legislature and a pioneer in the Civil Rights Movement, died at the age of 94, on Wednesday, December 4, 2019;
- WHEREAS,** Cuthbert Ormond Simpkins was born in Mansfield, Louisiana, on January 13, 1925; following high school, he attended Wiley College in Marshall, Texas, and Tennessee State University, where he received his undergraduate degrees; following this degree, he earned a Doctorate of Dental Surgery at Meharry Medical College School of Dentistry in Nashville;
- WHEREAS,** Dr. Simpkins joined the U.S. Air Force where he achieved the rank of captain and was honorably discharged in 1951;
- WHEREAS,** Dr. Simpkins was a Civil Rights pioneer, who led a successful fight against segregation and voter discrimination in northern Louisiana, having founded the United Christian Movement Conference on Registration and Voting, and served as a founding member of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference along with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., never flinching or retreating in the face of terror and threats of violence;
- WHEREAS,** Dr. Simpkins continued his efforts beyond the State of Louisiana, helping to form and establish York College of the City University of New York in 1966 in Queens, New York, before he returned home to the State of Louisiana;
- WHEREAS,** Dr. Simpkins further served his community in elected office, representing the Fourth District in the Louisiana House of Representatives from 1992 to 1996;
- WHEREAS,** he was a founder of the North Louisiana Civil Rights Coalition, to continue and promote the history of the Civil Rights movement in Louisiana;
- WHEREAS,** his passion for his community led him and his wife to donate the land for a medical center dedicated to delivering affordable and community-based medical services, now known as the Simpkins Community Health & Wellness Center in Shreveport, Louisiana;
- WHEREAS,** he is survived by his wife, Dr. Elaine Shoemaker Simpkins, and his children, Dr. Cuthbert Ormond Simpkins II, MD, Deborah Simpkins-Savage, Eric Simpkins, Cheri Simpkins Gardner and Alicia Ritchens; and
- WHEREAS,** Dr. C.O. Simpkins, Sr., lived his life with integrity and honor, setting an example for all with his passionate and tireless activism and public service and will long be remembered.
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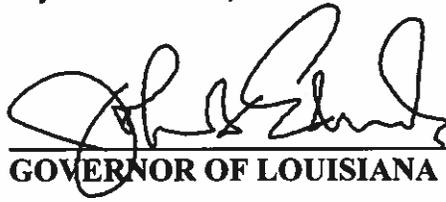
**NOW THEREFORE, I, JOHN BEL EDWARDS,** Governor of the State of Louisiana, by virtue of the authority vested by the Constitution and laws of the State of Louisiana, do hereby order and direct as follows:

**SECTION 1:** As an expression of respect for Dr. C.O. Simpkins, Sr., the flags of the United States and the State of Louisiana shall be flown at half-staff over the State Capitol until sunset on Friday, December 13, 2019.

**SECTION 2:** This Order is effective upon signature and shall remain in effect until sunset, Friday, December 13, 2019.



**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 11<sup>th</sup> day of December, 2019.

  
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**GOVERNOR OF LOUISIANA**

**ATTEST BY THE  
SECRETARY OF STATE**

  
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**SECRETARY OF STATE**