

Administration of Barack H. Obama, 2010

Statement on the Death of Benjamin L. Hooks

April 15, 2010

Michelle and I were saddened to hear of the passing of Dr. Benjamin L. Hooks. As I was running for this office, I had the honor of spending some time with Dr. Hooks and hearing about his extraordinary place in our American story. For 16 years, he led the NAACP with a strong hand and a nimble mind. And all the while, he not only reminded us of that historic organization's noble mission, he inspired each and every one of us to play our part in forging a stronger nation for all Americans. While many would have been satisfied with that achievement, Dr. Hooks was a man driven to accomplish so much more. A true trailblazer, he served as the first African American criminal court judge in his native Tennessee. He became the first African American to serve on the Federal Communications Commission. He earned the Presidential Medal of Freedom. And throughout it all, he made the time to serve others as a mentor and preach the Gospel as a pastor.

Our national life is richer for the time Dr. Hooks spent on this Earth. And our Union is more perfect for the way he spent it, giving a voice to the voiceless. Michelle and I offer our thoughts and prayers to his wife, Frances, his daughter, Patricia Gray, and all who knew Dr. Hooks through his extraordinary good works.

Categories: Statements by the President : Deaths :: Hooks, Benjamin L.

Names: Gray, Patricia; Hooks, Benjamin L.; Hooks, Frances; Obama, Michelle.

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