



Durbin Honors John Lewis During Black History Month

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WASHINGTON – In a speech on the Senate floor, U.S. Senate Democratic Whip Dick Durbin (D-IL), Chair of the Senate Judiciary Committee, recognized Black History Month and honored the life of U.S. Representative John Lewis, a civil rights icon who risked his life to march across the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma, Alabama, to protest the right to vote, and who fought for racial justice and equality in America throughout his entire life. Durbin shared how Emmett Till’s murder inspired a young John Lewis to join the civil rights movement, and how earlier this month the City of Chicago designated the home in which Emmet and his mother, Mamie, lived in a city historical site.

“I never met anyone in my life so unshakably committed to nonviolence and the transformative power of love,” Durbin said, speaking of Lewis. “There was another person who inspired John Lewis to spend his life getting into what he called ‘good trouble’. He said he was inspired into the movement to end America’s brutal history of race discrimination by the brutal death of Emmett till in Mississippi in 1955...he was only 14 years old, John Lewis was 15. When his body was returned to his grieving mother, she made a decision that changed the world. She demanded that her son's coffin remain open at his funeral so the world could see what racism and hatred had done to her only child.

“John Lewis drew a direct line from the civil rights movement to the Black Lives Matter protests of today. And he said, ‘Emmett Till was my George Floyd, Rayshard Brooks, Sandra Bland, and Breonna Taylor,’” Durbin continued.

Video of Durbin’s remarks on the Senate floor is available [here](#).

Audio of Durbin’s remarks on the Senate floor is available [here](#).

Footage of Durbin’s remarks on the Senate floor is available [here](#) for TV Stations.

