

## 2001 SESSION

ENGROSSED

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### SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 477

Offered January 30, 2001

*On the death of Evelyn Reid Syphax.*

Patrons—Whipple, Couric, Howell, Lambert, Lucas, Marsh, Maxwell, Miller, Y.B. and Ticer; Delegates: Almand, Baskerville, Brink, Crittenden, Darner, Jones, D.C. and Jones, J.C.

WHEREAS, Evelyn Reid Syphax, a former educator in Arlington County and a community leader known for her educational and civic activities, died on March 14, 2000; and

WHEREAS, a native of Lynchburg, Evelyn Syphax was a graduate of Virginia Union University, held a master's degree in early-childhood education from New York University, and was a longtime Arlington resident; and

WHEREAS, Evelyn Syphax taught at Langston, Clay, and Hoffman-Boston Elementary Schools in Arlington County from 1951 to 1967, beginning at a time when segregated schools remained the norm; and

WHEREAS, on February 2, 1959, four African-American students entered Arlington's Stratford Junior High School, making it the first integrated school in Virginia, and all four were former third-grade students of Evelyn Syphax; and

WHEREAS, in the early 1980s, Evelyn Syphax served as chairwoman of the Arlington County School Board, leading a successful overhaul of the county's desegregation plan that resulted in shorter bus rides for minority students; and

WHEREAS, Evelyn Syphax also championed a program to provide mentoring and counseling to help underachieving children improve their communication skills; and

WHEREAS, Evelyn Syphax served on the Virginia Advisory Council on Vocational Education and the Committee to Re-evaluate State Government; was a former president of the Northern Virginia Chapter of the National Coalition of 100 Black Women, which she helped organize; and was a former president of the Arlington Historical Society; and

WHEREAS, most recently, Evelyn Syphax helped obtain funds to establish the Black Heritage Museum in Arlington and served as chairwoman of the Black Heritage Museum Committee; and

WHEREAS, frequently cited for her community service activities, Evelyn Syphax was selected Arlington Woman of the Year by the Interservice Club Council in 1981, Citizen of the Year by the Adult Career and Vocation Advisory Council of the Arlington public schools in 1986, and Outstanding Black Business Woman by the Alpha Kappa Sorority in 1975; and

WHEREAS, Evelyn Syphax was clearly devoted to education, to children, and to the Arlington community, and on all three she left a lasting and beneficent impact; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the General Assembly note with sadness the loss of an invaluable citizen of Arlington, Evelyn Reid Syphax; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the family of Evelyn Reid Syphax as an expression of the General Assembly's admiration of her lifetime of commitment to the education of the children of Arlington.

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