

2004 SESSION

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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 240

Offered January 16, 2004

Celebrating the life of the Reverend Leroy P. Watson.

Patrons—Alexander, Drake, Howell, A.T., Joannou, Lewis and Melvin; Senators: Miller and Rerras

WHEREAS, the Reverend Leroy P. Watson of Hampton Roads, respected minister, NAACP leader, civic and civil rights activist, died on April 7, 2003; and

WHEREAS, Reverend Watson was born in the former Princess Anne County, now Virginia Beach, and moved to Florida where he attended Tampa public schools and Saint Petersburg City College; and

WHEREAS, an ex-boxer dubbed "the Champ," Reverend Watson gave up his career in the ring in 1948 to fight instead for equal rights for all citizens without regard to race or denomination; and

WHEREAS, dearly loved by his grateful congregation, Reverend Watson, a bold and consummate leader, was exuberant and inspiring as minister of the Bethlehem Baptist Church of Norfolk from 1971 until his retirement in 1993; and

WHEREAS, a master of the art of transcending language, race, and other cultural barriers, Reverend Watson touched the lives of countless people, giving his time, talents, and exceptional spiritual gifts freely and compassionately; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly hereby note with great sadness the loss of the Reverend Leroy P. Watson, a beloved minister, a tireless community leader, and an outstanding Virginian; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the family of the Reverend Leroy P. Watson as an expression of the General Assembly's respect and gratitude for his compassionate life and generous spirit.

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