

## 2006 SPECIAL SESSION I

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### HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 5159

Offered September 27, 2006

*Celebrating the life of Victoria Jackson Gray Adams.*

Patrons—Dance, BaCote, Brink, Byron, Callahan, Ebbin, Eisenberg, Hall, Ingram, Janis, Joannou, Johnson, Jones, D.C., Kilgore, Moran, Nixon, Phillips, Poisson, Scott, J.M., Spruill, Toscano, Valentine, Ward and Ware, R.L.

WHEREAS, a native of Mississippi, Victoria Jackson Gray Adams, who challenged the system of segregationist politics in her state and diligently led the fight to give blacks the right to vote, died on August 12, 2006; and

WHEREAS, Victoria Adams, a lifelong "spiritual, social activist," attended Wilberforce University in Ohio for a time, as well as citizenship school led by civil rights activist Septima Clark; she went on to teach literacy and voter registration classes to sharecroppers and domestic workers and became a devoted associate of the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.; and

WHEREAS, a respected citizen of the Commonwealth, Victoria Adams lived in Petersburg for 30 years, served as an inspirational minister at Virginia State University, and taught and lectured at numerous universities and civic organizations in the state and the nation; and

WHEREAS, Victoria Adams was a national board member of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference and a longtime lay leader in the United Methodist Church; and

WHEREAS, Victoria Adams is best known for her unprecedented, highly publicized challenge of the all-white official Mississippi state delegation, along with two other party leaders, Fannie Lou Hamer and Annie Devine, who fought unsuccessfully to be seated as delegates to the 1964 Democratic National Convention in Atlantic City; and

WHEREAS, Victoria Adams has been featured in many writings and films on the era, including the Academy Award-nominated *Freedom on My Mind* and *Standing on My Sisters' Shoulders*; and

WHEREAS, Victoria Adams will be fondly remembered and greatly missed by her beloved husband of 40 years, Reuben Adams, Jr., of Petersburg, her three devoted children, countless other loving family members and friends, and the citizens of the Commonwealth and the nation; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly mourn the passing of a respected civil rights leader and fine Virginian, Victoria Jackson Gray Adams; 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 Victoria Jackson Gray Adams as an expression of the General Assembly's respect for her memory.

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