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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 190

Offered January 9, 2008

Prefiled January 9, 2008

Celebrating the life of the Reverend Dr. Thelma Norfleet.

Patron—Jones, S.C.

WHEREAS, the Reverend Dr. Thelma Norfleet of Suffolk, a longtime public school teacher and beloved pastor of Tabernacle Christian Church, died on August 15, 2007; and

WHEREAS, Thelma Norfleet was the daughter of the late Joseph and Rosa Taylor of Nansemond County; and she graduated with a bachelor's degree from what is now Elizabeth City State University, earned a master of arts degree in secondary education from New York University, and completed postgraduate study at Hampton University, the University of Virginia, and Norfolk State University; and

WHEREAS, Thelma Norfleet married Cleophus S. Norfleet, Sr., and the couple shared a wonderful life together raising three children, Michelle, Yvonne, and the late Cleophus, Jr.; church activities were an integral part of their family life; and

WHEREAS, Thelma Norfleet served as an elementary teacher and principal for Nelson and Southampton County Public Schools, was a high school teacher of English and world geography, and an associate professor of history at Norfolk State University; she was also an outstanding teacher for the Suffolk City Public Schools, retiring in June 1982; and

WHEREAS, Thelma Norfleet continued to teach after she retired and was an instructor at the Lynchburg extension campuses of Paul D. Camp Community College and Virginia Seminary and College, and at the Virginia University of Lynchburg; and

WHEREAS, a retired educator who taught over three decades in the classroom, Thelma Norfleet attended seminary; and, at the age of 70, she completed her education with a master of divinity degree from Virginia Union School of Theology and a doctor of missiology degree from New Hope Seminary in Baltimore; and

WHEREAS, the director of Christian education and an associate pastor at Tabernacle Christian Church for 15 years, Thelma Norfleet was the church's first female deacon, preached her initial sermon to the congregation in 1989, and was ordained a minister in 1993; and

WHEREAS, an enthusiastic volunteer and excellent organizer throughout her life, Thelma Norfleet gave her time and many talents to numerous church and civic organizations, including as a member of the Virginia Lung Association, East Suffolk Gardens Civic League, East Suffolk Alumni Association, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Suffolk Ministers Association, Suffolk Interdenominational Alliance, and Eastern Virginia Clergy Association, and as a board member of the Nansemond Credit Union, Inc., the Southeastern Tidewater Opportunity Project, Inc., known as STOP, and the advisory board of the *Suffolk News-Herald*; and

WHEREAS, always eager to lend a helping hand to her fellow citizens in need, Thelma Norfleet was an inspiration to all who knew her, and she will be fondly remembered for her kind and generous nature and her philosophy to "live by the Golden Rule"; and

WHEREAS, Thelma Norfleet will be greatly missed by her husband of 60 years, Cleophus S. Norfleet, Sr.; her daughters Yvonne and Michelle and their wonderful families, including grandson Stanley Maurice; her numerous loving family members and friends; and the congregation of Tabernacle Christian Church; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly mourn the passing of a fine teacher and minister and outstanding Virginian, the Reverend Dr. Thelma Norfleet; 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 Dr. Thelma Norfleet as an expression of the General Assembly's respect for her memory.

INTRODUCED

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