

2009 SESSION

ENROLLED

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 735

Celebrating the life of Odell Hobbs.

Agreed to by the House of Delegates, January 16, 2009
Agreed to by the Senate, January 22, 2009

WHEREAS, Odell Hobbs of Richmond, the greatly admired conductor, composer, and longtime music professor at Virginia Union University, died on May 7, 2008; and

WHEREAS, born in Clarkton, North Carolina, Odell Hobbs was the only child of the late Leslie and Molly Hobbs and his talent for music was evident at a very young age; and

WHEREAS, Odell Hobbs earned a bachelor of music degree from Howard University in 1960 and received a doctoral degree in music from the University of Western Colorado; and

WHEREAS, an immensely gifted prodigy, Odell Hobbs studied with the late Margaret Hillis, who was the founder and renowned former director of the Chicago Symphony Chorus; and

WHEREAS, after beginning his academic career as an instructor at Langston University in Oklahoma, Dr. Hobbs joined the faculty of Virginia Union University in 1966; and

WHEREAS, during his 20-year tenure, Dr. Hobbs helped to found the department of music, establish a music education major, and organize a 75-member marching band at Virginia Union University; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Hobbs and his acclaimed chorale ensemble recorded many albums and performed in concerts across the country, proudly representing Virginia Union University and the Commonwealth; and

WHEREAS, a superb ambassador of music representing his fellow citizens, Dr. Hobbs was honored with a coveted invitation to Israel's first International Choral Festival; and

WHEREAS, during his long and distinguished career, Dr. Hobbs also taught music at Shaw University in Raleigh, North Carolina, and Virginia Union University in Richmond; served as artist-in-residence at Saint Paul's College in Lawrenceville; and retired as a choral instructor at Florida A&M University; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Hobbs' love and appreciation of music history led him all over the United States and to many countries abroad, where he studied what he called "the lost of strains" significant to African-American music culture that he found in instruments such as washboards, foot tubs, and saws, as well as in the unpolished vocal sounds of the spiritual traditions of early black churches; and

WHEREAS, a respected teacher, beloved mentor, and a knowledgeable music scholar, Dr. Hobbs expressed that the greatest purpose in life was to "spread the joy of music to others," especially his students; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly mourn the passing of a fine educator and an outstanding Virginian, Odell Hobbs; 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 Odell Hobbs as an expression of the General Assembly's respect for his memory.

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