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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 322

Offered February 22, 2010

Celebrating the life of Dr. James H.M. Henderson.

Patrons—Scott, J.M.; Senator: Whipple

WHEREAS, James H.M. Henderson, Ph.D., a respected educator, civil rights activist, and internationally known plant physiologist, died on December 3, 2009; and

WHEREAS, born in Falls Church on August 10, 1917, James H.M. "Jimmy" Henderson was the second son of educator and early civil rights activist parents, Dr. Edwin B. Henderson and Mary Ellen Henderson, and he grew up with his older brother, Edwin, on the family's home place built in 1913; and

WHEREAS, the Henderson family's Falls Church roots can be traced back to before the Revolutionary War; and

WHEREAS, James Henderson graduated from Dunbar High School in Washington, D.C., earned a bachelor's degree in biology at Howard University, and completed a master's and a doctoral degree at the University of Wisconsin, Madison; and

WHEREAS, during World War II, Dr. Henderson was accepted first as a chemist at Badger Ordnance Works in Baraboo, Wisconsin, to work on the production of smokeless powder, and then on a wartime project at the University of Chicago, testing toxic gases for gas warfare; and

WHEREAS, in 1945 Dr. Henderson accepted a teaching and research position with the George Washington Carver Research Foundation at Tuskegee University in Alabama; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Henderson received a postdoctoral appointment at the California Institute of Technology, and in 1948, he married his childhood sweetheart, Betty Alice Francis, and the couple raised two daughters and two sons; and

WHEREAS, in 1950 Dr. Henderson and his family moved back to Tuskegee, where he taught at Tuskegee University and conducted research for the American Cancer Society and the George Washington Carver Research Foundation, where he was director for several years; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Henderson devoted his career to research and teaching and helping young African American students realize their dreams of a college education; and

WHEREAS, in 1951 Dr. Henderson became Boy Scout Master of Troop 70 in Tuskegee, and he served as director of the local and regional Boy Scout troop activities for many years and was honored with the "Silver Beaver" award; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Henderson became a social and political activist and a leader during the civil rights movement; he helped supervise voter registration drives in the South and played a major role in the desegregation of public schools in Macon County, Alabama; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Henderson generously gave his time and expertise to many professional organizations, and he published over 50 journal articles and made numerous presentations to professional and lay audiences; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Henderson was instrumental in the founding in 1997 of the Tinner Hill Heritage Foundation, a nonprofit organization that preserves the history of the early civil rights pioneers of Falls Church; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Henderson received many awards and accolades over the years for his many contributions to his profession and to his community, including the George Washington Carver Research and Teaching Award and the American Association for the Advancement of Science Award for Lifetime Achievement in 2002, the Lifetime Achievement Award by the National Society of Pershing Rifles in 2005, and the Living Legacy Award by the Tinner Hill Heritage Foundation in 2007; and

WHEREAS, Dr. James Henderson will be fondly remembered and greatly missed by his loving family, his numerous friends and admirers, and the citizens of the Commonwealth; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly mourn the passing of an exemplary scientist, civil rights activist, and outstanding Virginian, Dr. James H.M. Henderson; 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 Dr. James H.M. Henderson as an expression of the General Assembly's respect for his memory.

INTRODUCED

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