

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 484

Celebrating the life of the Reverend Dr. Milton A. Reid.

Agreed to by the Senate, February 17, 2011
Agreed to by the House of Delegates, February 22, 2011

WHEREAS, Dr. Milton A. Reid, the son and grandson of Baptist ministers, was born on January 26, 1930, in Chesapeake in a house built by his father in the Butts Station neighborhood, and completed his earthly journey on December 12, 2010; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Milton A. Reid began his school career in the Chesapeake public schools, and after graduating from Providence High School, he enlisted in the United States Army, where he served as a paratrooper with the 82nd Airborne Division stationed at Fort Bragg, North Carolina; and

WHEREAS, after his military service, Dr. Milton A. Reid attended Fayetteville State Teachers College; transferred to Virginia Union University, where he received his bachelor's degree in history and, in 1958, a master's of divinity from the Samuel DeWitt Proctor School of Theology at Virginia Union University; and, in 1980, earned a doctoral degree in theology from Boston University; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Milton A. Reid, born during the era of de jure segregation and overt racism, experienced assaults, injustices, inequities, indignities, and discrimination, and these bitter life-altering experiences as a young child helped to shape his initial racial views and influenced his decision to fight and advocate vigorously for racial justice; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Milton A. Reid was called to the Gospel ministry at the age of 18, and in 1957, after pastoring two smaller churches, he was called to the pastorate of the historic First Baptist Church in Petersburg, where he met the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., during Dr. King's visit to Petersburg and whose Christian message of "love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you" transformed his attitude about persons who opposed racial equality; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Milton A. Reid was a close friend and compatriot of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and was appointed by Dr. King to the Executive Board of Directors of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, where he served faithfully for 42 years; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Milton A. Reid was a noted civil rights and social justice activist, and he engaged in numerous peaceful protests, was arrested for eating in the segregated Petersburg bus terminal cafe, led the effort resulting in the desegregation of Petersburg Hospital, protested Colonial Williamsburg's mock slave auction, and founded the Virginia chapter of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference; and

WHEREAS, he served as a member of the state advisory committee of the United States Commission on Civil Rights, and in an effort to effect meaningful change in Virginia, Dr. Milton A. Reid ran unsuccessfully for the Petersburg City Council, the Senate of Virginia, and the Norfolk City Council; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Milton A. Reid also served as pastor of New Calvary Baptist Church in Norfolk and Gideon's Riverside Fellowship Church in Chesapeake, where he led the development of Faith Village, an affordable single-family housing complex, as a part of the church's outreach ministry to the community; and

WHEREAS, a fiery preacher, affectionately known as "Milton, the Disciple," Dr. Milton A. Reid was a man of great faith and conviction, a humorous conversationalist whose religious beliefs informed his ideals, and a man who refused to compromise his integrity and values to gain acceptance with people; and

WHEREAS, he served in the pastoral ministry for over 60 years before retiring in 2001; after his retirement, Dr. Milton A. Reid continued his ministry of liberation and celebration through columns in the *New Journal & Guide*, the newspaper he owned and published from 1973 to 1985; and

WHEREAS, in 2009, Dr. Milton A. Reid was appointed a member of President Barack Obama's "Kitchen Cabinet," a group of unofficial advisers consisting of trusted friends and colleagues consulted by Presidents since Andrew Jackson's administration; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Milton A. Reid's life and legacy continues in the lives of the many persons for whom he fought and risked his life to secure human dignity, racial justice, and equality; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Milton A. Reid, beloved husband, father, and grandfather, esteemed pastor, zealous civil rights and social justice activist, devoted friend, and successful entrepreneur, will be remembered for his tireless and selfless drive to ensure Dr. King's dream for mankind; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the General Assembly hereby note with great sadness the loss of the Reverend Dr. Milton A. Reid; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the family of the Reverend Dr. Milton A. Reid as an expression of the General

Assembly's admiration of his great courage and deep respect for his memory.