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SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 144

Offered February 1, 2012

*Celebrating the life of William Alfred Smith.*

Patron—Locke

WHEREAS, William Alfred Smith of Hampton, a distinguished attorney and civil rights advocate, died on December 23, 2011; and

WHEREAS, a native of Richmond, William "Al" Smith grew up alongside his five siblings and attended Virginia Union University, interrupting his studies to proudly serve his country in the United States Air Force; and

WHEREAS, after completing his degree at Virginia Union University, Al Smith earned his Juris Doctor degree from the Howard University School of Law and settled in Hampton to begin his law career; and

WHEREAS, having grown up in an age of discrimination and segregation, Al Smith decided to use the law to forge a new path and specialized in civil rights and fair treatment issues; and

WHEREAS, Al Smith came to the defense of those facing inequalities, using his keen grasp of the law and persuasive reasoning as he fought for justice and equality for all; and

WHEREAS, in 1963, Al Smith successfully represented three black nurses fired for staging a sit-in after they were told they could not eat in a nursing school cafeteria built with state and federal funds; and

WHEREAS, Al Smith spent countless hours serving his clients ; he also devoted considerable time and attention to church and community affairs, cofounding the Citizen's Boys Club, which later became part of the Hampton Roads Boys and Girls Club; and

WHEREAS, a deeply spiritual man, Al Smith ministered to others through Bible study groups, prayer groups, jail ministries, email and radio; and

WHEREAS, in his free time, Al Smith delighted in spending time with dear family members and friends, researching family and African American history, and visiting historical sites in Jerusalem and Africa; and

WHEREAS, a devoted family man, Al Smith leaves behind to cherish his memory his wife, Marilyn; children, Howard, Miriam, Hope, and Holly, and their families; and numerous other family members, friends, and admirers; 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 a distinguished attorney and civil rights advocate, William Alfred Smith; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the family of William Alfred Smith as an expression of the General Assembly's respect for his memory.

INTRODUCED

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