

2013 SESSION

ENROLLED

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 284

Celebrating the life of James W. Holley III.

Agreed to by the Senate, January 17, 2013
Agreed to by the House of Delegates, January 25, 2013

WHEREAS, James W. Holley III, a respected dentist whose passion for his hometown of Portsmouth led to years of groundbreaking civic service and several terms as mayor, died on October 5, 2012; and

WHEREAS, a graduate of I.C. Norcom High School, James Holley proudly served his country during World War II and earned a bachelor's degree from West Virginia State College, now University, which later awarded him an honorary doctor of laws; and

WHEREAS, after receiving a doctor of dental surgery degree from Howard University, James Holley embarked on a career in dentistry that was marked by skill and dedication to his patients and leadership in his profession as a member of numerous dental organizations; and

WHEREAS, James Holley received an array of awards over the course of his career for his commitment and contributions to the dental profession, including several Dentist of the Year recognitions; and

WHEREAS, an admired civic and civil rights leader, James Holley led efforts to integrate the City of Portsmouth's libraries, hospitals, restaurants, and golf courses and became one of the city's first two black city council members since Reconstruction when he won election in 1968; and

WHEREAS, for 16 years, James Holley worked alongside other city council members, civic and local government leaders, and concerned citizens as a member of the city council, including a term as vice mayor, and provided insight and guidance as a member of various committees and commissions; and

WHEREAS, in 1984, James Holley became the City of Portsmouth's first black mayor; known for his flawless attire, he eventually served five terms and earned the nickname "Mr. Portsmouth" for his enthusiastic support of what he called the "Portsmouth Family"; and

WHEREAS, the recipient of numerous awards and accolades for his distinguished community service, James Holley helped forge a new era in Portsmouth's illustrious history through his work for equal services and opportunities for the city's residents; and

WHEREAS, a dedicated dentist and tireless advocate of Portsmouth, James Holley will be fondly remembered and greatly missed by many family members, friends, and citizens of his beloved hometown; 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 former mayor of Portsmouth, James W. Holley III; and, be it

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

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