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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 120

Offered January 9, 2014

Celebrating the life of the Honorable Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela.

Patrons—Toscano, BaCote, Brink, Bulova, Carr, Cole, Dance, Filler-Corn, Fowler, Futrell, Helsel, Herring, Hester, Hope, Howell, A.T., Ingram, James, Joannou, Keam, Krupicka, Landes, LeMunyon, Lewis, Lopez, Mason, Massie, Minchew, Morrissey, O'Bannon, Plum, Rasoul, Simon, Spruill, Surovell, Torian, Tyler, Ward and Watts

WHEREAS, the Honorable Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela, the first African and founding President of the democratic nation of South Africa, was born into a royal family of the Xhosa nation in the tiny village of Mvezo in the hills of the Eastern Cape of South Africa, on July 18, 1918, and was ushered into the realm of his forefathers on December 5, 2013; and

WHEREAS, born Rolihlahla Mandela under brutal apartheid rule, the Honorable Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela was named, "Nelson," by his teacher as a part of a custom to give African school children a Christian name; and

WHEREAS, the Honorable Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela, affectionately called "Madiba" or "Tata," terms of endearment, reverence, and respect among all South Africans, was a South African anti-apartheid revolutionary, politician, and philanthropist who served as President of South Africa from 1994 to 1999; and

WHEREAS, South African historians and experts, attempting to define for the world the terms of endearment by which the Honorable Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela was often referred, explained in South African culture, the terms were intimate expressions that simply reflected the personality of "a man who could break the bounds of formality by cracking a joke, stopping a news conference to greet a child, or strolling over to his neighbors for a pop-in visit"; and

WHEREAS, when he was an infant, his father was stripped of his chieftainship by a British magistrate for insubordination; after his father's death, the Honorable Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela willingly claimed his father's title as his inheritance and was reared in the home of the Thembu chief to study leadership and power; and

WHEREAS, he attended the Methodist missionary schools and the University College of Fort Hare, the only residential college for Blacks in South Africa, where he earned his law degree and became involved in the liberation movement; and

WHEREAS, the Honorable Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela was convinced that freedom and self-rule was the right of Black South Africans, and his militant and persistent fight against apartheid resulted in 27 years of imprisonment in the infamous Robben Island prison, where he was isolated in a tiny cell without essentials, forced to do hard labor, denied the right to visit with or write to family for months, and singled out for gratuitous cruelties by the prison authorities because he was so revered by other prisoners and Black South Africans; and

WHEREAS, throughout his imprisonment, the Honorable Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela honed his skills as a leader, negotiator, statesman, and proselytizer; he maintained his regal bearing, inner strength, and audacious self-confidence, which was attributed to his royal upbringing, and he never allowed the official South African doctrine and policies of white superiority to diminish his spirit or cause him to doubt his equality to any man; and

WHEREAS, in February 1990, the Honorable Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela was released from prison, and after four years of laborious negotiations with the ruling South African government for a peaceful transfer of power to majority rule, he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1993, together with President F. W. de Klerk, for his efforts; and

WHEREAS, after historic elections in April 1994, in which Black South Africans stood in line for miles, the Honorable Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela was elected President and inaugurated as the first African President of South Africa on May 10, 1994; and

WHEREAS, he exhibited a genius for reconciliation and established the nation's Truth and Reconciliation Commission to devise a plan to balance justice and forgiveness in a country whose history was bereft by racial animus and hatred; and

WHEREAS, as President, he encouraged investment by capitalists, businesses, and others to help build South Africa's education system, infrastructure, economy, and global standing; and

WHEREAS, the world mourns the Honorable Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela, a statesman who dedicated his life to the struggle of his people, and in breaking the bonds of apartheid, freed all South Africans and exhorted mankind by his example to forsake bitterness and embrace peace, freedom, equality, and justice; now, therefore, be it

INTRODUCED

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56 RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly hereby
57 note with great sadness the loss of the Honorable Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela; and, be it
58 RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution
59 for presentation to the family of the Honorable Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela, and to the Embassy of
60 South Africa in the United States, as an expression of the General Assembly's respect for his memory,
61 sacrifice, and contributions to the nation of South Africa and the world.