

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 13

Celebrating the life of Walter Gaines, Jr.

Agreed to by the Senate, January 9, 2014
Agreed to by the House of Delegates, January 17, 2014

WHEREAS, Walter Gaines, Jr., was born on September 10, 1935, and peacefully entered into eternal rest on June 5, 2013, surrounded by loved ones; and

WHEREAS, Walter Gaines, Jr., was reared in a loving Christian home and nurtured by an extended family in Woodville, a small, close-knit community in Richmond where family and neighbors, who instilled in him the values of education, respect, faith, civic and personal responsibility, and morality, were paramount; and

WHEREAS, Walter Gaines, Jr., was educated in the Richmond City Public Schools and graduated from Armstrong High School in 1953; and

WHEREAS, after graduation, he was employed for three years at Owens and Minor, Inc., before enlisting in the United States Air Force and serving his country valiantly and honorably in Germany and the Philippines; during and after his military service, he told stories of his service with the then-unknown singer Johnny Cash, a fact of which he was very proud; and

WHEREAS, after his honorable discharge from the United States Air Force, Walter Gaines, Jr., accepted employment with the United States Postal Service in Richmond, where he worked as a letter carrier for 35 years until his retirement; and

WHEREAS, remembering the lessons of his youth concerning family, neighbors, and civic and personal responsibility, Walter Gaines, Jr., was actively engaged in the lives of his three daughters, attending parent-teacher meetings, becoming an active member of the Parent-Teacher Association of the schools that they attended, and assuming leadership roles in community organizations, such as the Ginter Park Residents Association and the Bellevue Civic Association, which honored him in 1988 for thwarting a robbery in the neighborhood while on his delivery route; and

WHEREAS, Walter Gaines, Jr., represented letter carriers as a shop steward at the Bellevue Post Office and as the Richmond area representative at the National Association of Letter Carriers Convention for many years and received the convention's membership Gold Card for his dedication and diligence in representing his fellow carriers; and

WHEREAS, Walter Gaines, Jr., gave of his time, resources, and talents to many organizations, and his memberships included the Providence Park Civic Association, of which he was a founding member and of which he served as president for more than 30 years; Habitat for Humanity, which he served as a board member and in which he was instrumental in building homes for the needy and homeless in his neighborhood; the Crusade for Voters; the City of Richmond Personnel Committee, for which he was recognized by the City of Richmond with the Lifetime Achievement Award; the Astoria Beneficial Club, which he served as president from 1999 to 2000 and as a member of the Club's Awards and Anniversary Committees and Board of Governors; he received the Astoria Citizenship Award in 1988 and 2012 and was named Astorian of the Year in 2002; and

WHEREAS, his faith was very important to him and Walter Gaines, Jr., devoted considerable time to caring for the affairs of his beloved Mount Tabor Baptist Church, where he was an active and regular congregant as well as chairman of the Board of Trustees for many years; he was named "Father of the Year" in 1995, honored as "A Distinguished Black Hero" in 1998, and recognized as Trustee-Emeritus by the church for more than 40 years of faithful service on June 2, 2013; and

WHEREAS, Walter Gaines, Jr., was always impeccably groomed and dressed, his distinctive beard and mustache neat and trimmed, and he was forever positive and full of joy and love for others; he illuminated any place he entered and his presence and roaring laughter will be remembered but sorely missed by his family, relatives, friends, and neighbors; 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 Walter Gaines, Jr.; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the family of Walter Gaines, Jr., as an expression of the General Assembly's respect for his memory and his dedicated service to his family, church, and community.

ENROLLED

SJ13ER