

2014 SPECIAL SESSION I

ENROLLED

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 5121

Celebrating the life of Raymond Harold Boone.

Agreed to by the House of Delegates, June 12, 2014

Agreed to by the Senate, June 12, 2014

WHEREAS, Raymond Harold Boone, revered founding editor and publisher of the *Richmond Free Press*, was born on February 2, 1938, in Suffolk and entered into eternal rest on June 3, 2014; and

WHEREAS, Raymond Harold Boone graduated from East Suffolk High School, where he started both its newspaper and yearbook, stating that it was an opportunity to put his school on the map; he attended Norfolk State University, where he gained reporting experience writing for the *Norfolk Journal and Guide* and the *Suffolk News-Herald* before transferring to Boston University, where he earned his degree while serving as city editor for the *Boston Chronicle* and as a reporter for the *Quincy Patriot Ledger*; he earned a master's degree in journalism from Howard University; and

WHEREAS, after his graduation, Raymond Harold Boone accepted employment with Tuskegee University as the public information officer before being drafted into the United States Army in the early 1960s, where he served honorably and with distinction; and

WHEREAS, following his military service, Raymond Harold Boone became the White House correspondent for the *Afro-American* in Baltimore at the height of the Civil Rights Movement and later also reported from Cuba, Russia, and other overseas hot spots as an international correspondent for the National Newspaper Publishers Association; and

WHEREAS, in 1965, Raymond Harold Boone was assigned to Richmond as the editor of the local edition of the *Afro-American*, which marked his rise as a prominent leader in the Richmond community, using the power of his pen to speak fearlessly and courageously against racial injustice; in 1969, he collaborated on the creation of the Frederick Douglass Program to train young African Americans for careers in journalism, and during his 11-year tenure as editor, his efforts helped to boost the power and influence of many African Americans in local, state, and national politics; and

WHEREAS, from 1976 to 1981, Raymond Harold Boone served as editor and vice president of the *Afro-American Newspapers* in Baltimore; in 1981 he began teaching journalism at Howard University, where he earned a reputation as a tough, demanding educator who emphasized excellence and ethics; he returned to Washington, D.C., in 1992 to start his own newspaper; and

WHEREAS, Raymond Harold Boone was the son of Tsujiro Miyazaki and Leathia Boone, loving parents who were unable to marry due to Virginia's laws prohibiting interracial marriage; who emphasized the importance of family, determination, hard work, and tolerance; and who instilled in him a strong work ethic and nurtured his business acumen; his family's struggles fueled his passion to eradicate social and racial injustices; and

WHEREAS, Raymond Harold Boone was actively involved in his community and received numerous awards and recognitions, among them twice serving as a Pulitzer Prize juror, which paved the way for the inclusion of African Americans on the Pulitzer board at Columbia University; he was a proud lifetime member of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity and member of the National Association of Guardsmen, the National Newspaper Publishers Association, the Virginia Communications Hall of Fame in 2000, national leadership honor society Omicron Delta Kappa in 2013, and many other professional and community groups; and he was a longtime member of St. Philip's Episcopal Church in Richmond; and

WHEREAS, Raymond Harold Boone will be remembered for his thoughtfulness, honesty, integrity, courage, intellectual curiosity, and audacity to speak truth to power, even when confronted by injustice, inequality, and ignorance; and

WHEREAS, Raymond Harold Boone, a longtime journalist and defender of freedom, will be sorely missed by his family, friends, and colleagues who will cherish his memory forever; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly hereby note with great sadness the loss of Raymond Harold Boone, founder, editor, and publisher of the *Richmond Free Press*; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the family of Raymond Harold Boone as an expression of the General Assembly's appreciation for his service to the Commonwealth and respect for his memory.

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