

2014 SPECIAL SESSION I

INTRODUCED

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SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 5005

Offered March 31, 2014

Celebrating the life of Albert Byron Smith.

Patrons—Edwards and Smith; Delegate: Rasoul

WHEREAS, Albert Byron Smith, a respected businessman and devoted community and civil rights leader in Roanoke, died on February 24, 2014; and

WHEREAS, a native of Danville, A. Byron Smith learned the value of hard work at a young age as a paperboy; he attended Danville City public schools and furthered his education at the University of Virginia and Roanoke College; and

WHEREAS, A. Byron Smith joined many of the other young men of his generation in service to his country during World War II; he served as a platoon leader in the United States Army in the European Theater of the war; and

WHEREAS, beginning his professional career in 1937, A. Byron Smith served as an assistant manager of Virginia Mutual Benefit Life Insurance Company; a successful and admired entrepreneur, he founded the A. Byron Smith Oil Company and a real estate business in 1954 and a bail bond business in 1959; and

WHEREAS, A. Byron Smith was a recognized leader in the civil rights movement, and as a member of the Bi-Racial Committee, he worked to encourage desegregation among Roanoke businesses; he also led efforts to close the landfill where Washington Park is now located and merge the William A. Hunton YMCA with the Roanoke Central YMCA; and

WHEREAS, working tirelessly to better the Roanoke community, A. Byron Smith offered his time and talents to many civic and service organizations; he was a member of the NAACP, the Roanoke Area Ministries board, and the Salvation Army board at the time of his passing; and

WHEREAS, A. Byron Smith received countless awards and accolades for his contributions to the community and the Commonwealth, but always remained a compassionate and humble Christian who helped others with no expectation of reward; and

WHEREAS, A. Byron Smith enjoyed fellowship and worship with the community as an active, longtime member of High Street Baptist Church, where he served as a deacon; and

WHEREAS, predeceased by his wife of 42 years, Miriam, A. Byron Smith will be greatly missed and fondly remembered by his daughters, Geneva, Shmura, Crystal, and Anita, and their families and numerous other family members and friends; 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 Albert Byron Smith, a pillar of the Roanoke community and a true gentleman; and, be it

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

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