

2015 SESSION

INTRODUCED

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HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 311

Offered February 26, 2015

Commending Burrell Memorial Hospital.

Patrons—Rasoul, Austin, Carr, Cole, Futrell, Hope, Landes, Plum and Ware

WHEREAS, Burrell Memorial Hospital opened 100 years ago, on March 18, 1915, as the only hospital in Roanoke caring for the area's African American population; and

WHEREAS, the hospital was named in memory of Dr. Isaac David Burrell, an African American physician who died following gallstone surgery in Washington, D.C.; he was forced to travel in a train's baggage car to seek medical treatment because he could not be operated on in Roanoke's existing segregated hospitals; and

WHEREAS, when it opened, Burrell Memorial Hospital was a 10-bed facility, and Dr. Lylburn C. Downing was the superintendent of the hospital, a position he held until 1947; and

WHEREAS, a few years after it opened, Burrell Memorial Hospital moved into the former Allegheny Institute building at the corner of McDowell Avenue and Park Street, now 7th Street; in 1955, a new hospital building opened at the same site; and

WHEREAS, Burrell Memorial Hospital remained a prominent African American institution in Roanoke until 1965, when all hospitals were ordered to desegregate; the hospital closed in 1979, but the building was renovated a few years later and today is the home of Blue Ridge Behavioral Healthcare; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, That the dedicated medical professionals who helped open Burrell Memorial Hospital and the hundreds of people who worked for Burrell Memorial Hospital during its 64 years of service hereby be commended on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of the founding of Burrell Memorial Hospital; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the Harrison Museum of African American Culture as an expression of the House of Delegates' respect and admiration for Burrell Memorial Hospital's years of service to the African American community in Roanoke and Southwest Virginia.

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