

15103225D

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 275

Offered January 14, 2015

Prefiled January 13, 2015

Celebrating the life of Wendell Scott, Sr.

Patrons—Stanley; Delegates: Adams and Marshall, D.W.

WHEREAS, Wendell Scott, Sr., a highly talented driver and the first African American to win a NASCAR premier series event, who died on December 23, 1990, will be inducted into the NASCAR Hall of Fame with the class of 2015; and

WHEREAS, a native of Danville, Wendell Scott joined many of the other young men of his generation in service to his country with the United States Army during World War II; he returned from the war and used his experience as a mechanic to open a garage and later drove a taxi in the area; and

WHEREAS, fulfilling a longtime dream to become a stock car racer, Wendell Scott made his debut on the Dixie Circuit in 1952, winning his first race after only two weeks; with his obvious natural talent and tough, but smart, style of driving, he earned the respect and admiration of both fans and competitors; and

WHEREAS, courageously facing prejudice from organizers and lacking a major sponsor, Wendell Scott maintained his own vehicles, often raced with out-of-date equipment, and enlisted family members as his pit crew, which was led by his sons, Frank and Wendell, Jr.; and

WHEREAS, a determined competitor, Wendell Scott won the Dixie Circuit Virginia State Championship in 1959 and moved up to the Grand National Series (now Sprint Cup Series) in 1961; throughout his career, he made 495 starts, finished in the top five 20 times, and was a top 10 finisher 147 times; and

WHEREAS, in 1963, Wendell Scott became the first African American driver to win a race in what is now the Sprint Cup Series; starting in 15th place at Speedway Park in Jacksonville, Florida, he led the field for 27 laps and won by two full laps; and

WHEREAS, despite being initially denied the victory and never receiving the trophy, Wendell Scott continued to race until 1973; his best season came in 1966, when he finished sixth in points; and

WHEREAS, Wendell Scott's family was presented with a trophy for his victory in 2010, 20 years after his death in 1990, and his inspirational story has become the subject of numerous documentaries and biographies; he was inducted into the International Motorsports Hall of Fame in Talladega, Alabama, in 1999, and a historical marker commemorating his legacy was erected in Danville in 2013; and

WHEREAS, the Wendell Scott Foundation, founded by Wendell Scott's son, Warrick, and grandchildren, works to honor his memory and legacy by establishing programs to serve and support at-risk youth in the Commonwealth, including educational and career initiatives; 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 Wendell Scott, Sr., an accomplished stock car racer and a beacon for social justice, on the occasion of his induction into the NASCAR Hall of Fame in 2015; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the family of Wendell Scott, Sr., as an expression of the General Assembly's respect for his memory and historic achievements.

INTRODUCED

SJ275