

2016 SESSION

ENROLLED

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 244

Celebrating the life of Julia Melton Thornton.

Agreed to by the House of Delegates, March 11, 2016

WHEREAS, Julia Melton Thornton of Richmond, a respected educator and community activist who was involved in voter registration efforts, an active member of many professional and service organizations, and a devoted wife and mother, died on January 12, 2016; and

WHEREAS, Julia Thornton, who was born in Ashland and then moved to Richmond, attended Richmond Public Schools and graduated from Armstrong High School, where she met her husband; she earned a bachelor's degree from Virginia Union University and a master's degree from Case Western Reserve University; and

WHEREAS, education was the major focus of Julia Thornton's career; she taught elementary school in Ohio before returning to the Commonwealth, where she taught at John M. Gandy Elementary School in Ashland and later worked for more than 20 years as a reading teacher at the now-closed Webster Davis and Baker Elementary Schools in Richmond; and

WHEREAS, Julia Thornton then became a teacher in the School of Education at Virginia Union University; she prepared many students for teaching careers and also served as chair of the department from 1982 to 1989; and

WHEREAS, a longtime supporter of her husband's political advocacy work, Julia Thornton was passionate about voter education and registration, encouraging African Americans to become involved in the political process; and

WHEREAS, Julia Thornton was known for her spunk, determination, and ability to get things done; she was an active member of the Richmond chapter of The Links, Inc., Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Pi Lambda Theta, an international honor society and professional association for educators, and her high school and college reunion and alumni associations; and

WHEREAS, Julia Thornton also enjoyed gardening, reading, spending time with her family, and collecting historical items; she was predeceased by her husband, William, and will be greatly missed and fondly remembered by her daughter, Laura, and her family; and many other family members and friends; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the House of Delegates hereby note with great sadness the loss of Julia Melton Thornton of Richmond, a retired teacher, community activist and leader, and devoted wife and mother; 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 Julia Melton Thornton as an expression of the House of Delegates' respect for her memory.

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