

## 2017 SESSION

INTRODUCED

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### HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 731

Offered January 12, 2017

*Celebrating the life of Anthony Randolph Cooke.*

Patrons—Knight, Boysko, Byron, Carr, Cole, Davis, Heretick, Holcomb, Hope, Jones, Landes, Lindsey, Minchew, Mullin, Rasoul, Simon, Stolle, Villanueva, Ware and Webert; Senators: Cosgrove, Howell, Lewis and Wagner

WHEREAS, Anthony Randolph Cooke, a dedicated public safety officer who broke down barriers as the first black firefighter in Virginia Beach, died on December 27, 2016; and

WHEREAS, Anthony "Tony" Randolph Cooke honorably served his country as a member of the United States Army during the Vietnam War; desirous to be of further service to the community, he joined the Seatack Fire Department, an independent all-black volunteer fire station; and

WHEREAS, when Tony Cooke transferred to the Virginia Beach Fire Department in 1976, he became the city's first full-time African American firefighter; he bravely and professionally confronted discrimination, never wavering in his desire to safeguard the lives and property of his fellow residents; and

WHEREAS, in 1987, Tony Cooke received the Virginia Beach Fire Department's Medal of Honor after he rescued four children from a house fire, carrying two of them under his arms, while leading the other two to safety as they held on to his jacket; and

WHEREAS, after his well-earned retirement in 2001, Tony Cooke met and married his wife, Rosita, and settled in Virginia Beach, where he touched countless lives over the course of his 25-year career; and

WHEREAS, Tony Cooke's courage and leadership inspired other young African American men in the area to serve and safeguard the members of the community as firefighters; he leaves behind a legacy of excellence for the entire Virginia Beach Fire Department; and

WHEREAS, Tony Cooke will be fondly remembered and greatly missed by his wife, Rosita, and numerous other family members, friends, and fellow firefighters; 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 Anthony Randolph Cooke; 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 Anthony Randolph Cooke as an expression of the General Assembly's respect for his memory.

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