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HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 432

Offered February 20, 2017

Celebrating the life of Virginia Drew Randolph.

Patron—Hester

WHEREAS, Virginia Drew Randolph, who broke barriers to serve and protect her fellow community members as the first African American law-enforcement officer in Norfolk, died on August 10, 2016, at the age of 103; and

WHEREAS, a native of Ivor, Virginia Randolph was one of 40 women who applied for two openings for female African American officers at the Norfolk Police Department in 1953; the applicants were some of the most highly educated women in Norfolk at the time, and only 18 were interviewed for the position; and

WHEREAS, Virginia Randolph and Margaret Barfield were selected for the position; as the first to be sworn in, Virginia Randolph has the distinction of being the first African American policewoman in Norfolk; and

WHEREAS, assigned to the Norfolk Police Department's Youth Bureau, Virginia Randolph walked the beat along Church Street in the city's black business district; she treated everyone she met with courtesy and respect, and she strove to be a role model for the young people she encountered in the course of her duties; and

WHEREAS, in the early 1950s, a notorious criminal, who had just assaulted her husband and two male police officers, surrendered peacefully to Virginia Randolph, saying she was proud that an African American woman could become a law-enforcement officer; and

WHEREAS, Virginia Randolph later worked as a switchboard operator for Norfolk Community Hospital and in the receiving department of Norfolk State College, but she maintained close ties with the Norfolk Police Department throughout her life and remained an inspiration to other aspiring law-enforcement officers, including her son, who became an officer in 1968; and

WHEREAS, guided by her faith, Virginia Randolph enjoyed fellowship and worship with the community as a 97-year member of Second Calvary Baptist Church, where she served as a deaconess and church clerk; and

WHEREAS, predeceased by her husband, James, Virginia Randolph will be fondly remembered and greatly missed by her children, Adam and Gerlean, and their families, and numerous other family members, friends, and fellow law-enforcement officers; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the House of Delegates hereby note with great sadness the loss of Virginia Drew Randolph, a pioneer for women in law enforcement who made countless contributions to the Norfolk community; 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 Virginia Drew Randolph as an expression of the House of Delegates' respect for her memory.

INTRODUCED

HR432