

2018 SESSION

ENROLLED

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 134

Celebrating the life of Nannie Mae Berger Hairston.

Agreed to by the House of Delegates, January 19, 2018

Agreed to by the Senate, January 25, 2018

WHEREAS, Nannie Mae Berger Hairston, a beloved wife and mother and a community activist who tirelessly promoted civil rights in Montgomery County, died on July 14, 2017; and

WHEREAS, the daughter of a coal miner, Nannie Hairston was born in West Virginia and attended Excelsior High School; in her youth, she learned the value of compassion from her parents, who often housed and fed those in need; and

WHEREAS, after marrying and moving to Christiansburg in 1953, Nannie Hairston devoted herself to serving her local community and fighting for equal rights; she became a prominent member of the Montgomery County-Radford City-Floyd County branch of the NAACP, serving variously as its membership chair and in several other executive positions; and

WHEREAS, a lifelong supporter of women and children, Nannie Hairston worked to expand voter registration as a founding member of the Montgomery County League of Women Voters, advocated for increased employment opportunities for African American women, and opened her home to underprivileged local children; and

WHEREAS, in addition to her civil rights activism, Nannie Hairston was also a passionate supporter of historical preservation in her local community; one influential project involved promoting the restoration of the former building of the Christiansburg Institute, a school opened shortly after the Civil War to educate African Americans in Southwestern Virginia; and

WHEREAS, during her lifetime, Nannie Hairston's tough and tenacious support of equality saw her honored with several awards, including the state conference of the NAACP's Maggie L. Walker Community Service Award and her selection as one of Dominion Energy and the Library of Virginia's Strong Men and Women in Virginia History; and

WHEREAS, in 1991, the Montgomery County-Radford City-Floyd County branch of the NAACP presented Nannie Hairston with the inaugural Nannie B. Hairston Community Service Award, which has been awarded annually ever since; in 2006, she was honored with a bronze bust in the Montgomery County Government Center; and

WHEREAS, predeceased by her husband of 70 years, John, and one daughter, Edwina, Nannie Hairston will be fondly remembered and greatly missed by her daughters, Catherine, Dy-Anne, Colette, and their families, as well as countless other friends, family members, and members of the Montgomery County community; 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 Nannie Mae Berger Hairston, a community organizer who was steadfast in her devotion to the residents of Montgomery County; 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 Nannie Mae Berger Hairston as an expression of the General Assembly's respect for her memory.

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