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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 183

Offered January 30, 2018

Celebrating the life of Nellie Jane Hinderman McLeod.

Patrons—Aird, Torian, Bagby, Bourne, Carroll Foy, Hayes, Jones, J.C., McQuinn, Price, Rasoul, Tyler and Ward

WHEREAS, Nellie Jane Hinderman McLeod, a beloved wife and mother who was a trailblazing Civil Rights campaigner and was instrumental in the integration of Chesterfield County Public Schools, died on October 29, 2017; and

WHEREAS, born in Beeville, Texas, in 1926, Nellie McLeod moved to Virginia after her marriage to husband William McLeod; the couple later settled in Hopewell and Ettrick, where she worked as a hair stylist; and

WHEREAS, a fearless campaigner for Civil Rights, Nellie McLeod spent much of the 1960s leading voter registration drives and championing equal treatment for African Americans in the justice system; she also spearheaded movements for the release of wrongly incarcerated black prisoners and the rehiring of black workers unfairly let go from their jobs; and

WHEREAS, in 1961, having become fed up with the inferior supplies and facilities at segregated schools in Ettrick, Nellie McLeod attempted to enroll her daughters at the all-white Ettrick Elementary School; when her request was denied, she led a small group of African American parents in filing a lawsuit against the Chesterfield County School Board; and

WHEREAS, ignoring threats and other intimidation, Nellie McLeod persevered with her lawsuit until November 1962, when a court order finally resulted in the integration of public schools in Chesterfield County; and

WHEREAS, during her long career as a community organizer, Nellie McLeod led countless meetings and protests and met with renowned Civil Rights figures such as Wyatt Tee Walker and the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.; and

WHEREAS, Nellie McLeod was a longtime Democratic Party supporter who represented the state as a delegate at numerous national conventions; and

WHEREAS, in recognition of her courage and leadership, Nellie McLeod received awards from the NAACP and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference; and

WHEREAS, outside of her pioneering career as an activist, Nellie McLeod was a talented gardener and cook who regularly volunteered at Central State Hospital in Petersburg; and

WHEREAS, Nellie McLeod will be fondly remembered and greatly missed by her husband, William; children, Harold, Priscilla, Charles, Sheila, Yolanda, and Kimberli, and their families; and countless other family members, friends, and supporters; 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 Nellie Jane Hinderman McLeod, a brave and influential activist who promoted education equality in Chesterfield 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 Nellie Jane Hinderman McLeod as an expression of the General Assembly's respect for her memory.