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## HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 1030

Offered February 18, 2019

*Celebrating the life of the Reverend Dr. Kenny Smith.*

Patrons—Keam; Senator: Petersen

WHEREAS, the Reverend Dr. Kenny Smith, a military veteran who led First Baptist Church of Vienna and was active on civil rights and humanitarian issues, died on November 15, 2018; and

WHEREAS, a resident of Haymarket, Kenny Smith was known as a man committed to humanity; he was concerned about the economic and social conditions in which people found themselves, their economic well-being, jobs, health, and social justice; and

WHEREAS, Kenny Smith was born in Atlanta and joined the United States Air Force after graduating from high school; during 25 years in the military, he served in Vietnam, where he received commendation medals and was stationed in Omaha, Nebraska; Fort Belvoir; and Izmir, Turkey; and

WHEREAS, Kenny Smith earned a bachelor's degree in business management from the University of Nebraska-Omaha, a Master of Divinity degree from Howard University, and a Doctor of Ministry degree from Virginia Union University's Samuel DeWitt Proctor School of Theology; and

WHEREAS, Kenny Smith was a minister at Morning Star Baptist Church in Omaha and Bethlehem Baptist Church in Alexandria before joining First Baptist Church of Vienna; during his tenure at First Baptist, he led efforts to expand the church, start a credit union, and implement other civic projects; he was the longest serving pastor at the predominantly African American church, which was founded in 1867 by former slaves; and

WHEREAS, Kenny Smith was recently named pastor emeritus of his congregation; after retiring from First Baptist, he and his wife, the Reverend Mary Lucille Steverson Smith, formed Christian Services, Inc., which, among its services, provides interim pastors for churches that are in the process of selecting full-time leaders; and

WHEREAS, in 2008, Kenny Smith was elected president of the Northern Virginia Clergy Council for the Prevention of HIV/AIDS; he also served as a trustee of both the John Leland Center for Theological Studies and Virginia Union University, and as a board member of the Baptist General Convention of Virginia and the First Baptist Church-Vienna Federal Credit Union; and

WHEREAS, Kenny Smith served as an adjunct professor at the Howard University School of Divinity, a visiting professor at Wesley Theological Seminary, and an instructor at the Evans-Smith Leadership Training Program and Northern Virginia Baptist Association; and

WHEREAS, Kenny Smith received dozens of awards over the years, and spent two terms as president of the Fairfax County NAACP; he was the former president of the Baptist General Convention of Virginia; moderator of the Northern Virginia Baptist Association; and a board member with Habitat for Humanity Northern Virginia, Vienna Church Coalition for Housing, and Medical Care for Children Partnership of Fairfax; and

WHEREAS, a lifelong world traveler who visited 15 countries, including Israel and all seven churches in Turkey that were mentioned in the Book of Revelation; Kenny Smith authored the book *Retiring with Grace: A Baptist Pastor's Journey from the Pulpit to Retirement*; he also enjoyed coin collecting, football, and expanding his knowledge; and

WHEREAS, Kenny Smith will be fondly remembered and greatly missed by his wife, Mary; his daughters, Donna and Christa, and their families; and numerous other family members and friends; 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 the Reverend Dr. Kenny Smith, a military veteran who led First Baptist Church of Vienna and was active on civil rights and humanitarian issues; 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 the Reverend Dr. Kenny Smith as an expression of the General Assembly's respect for his memory.

INTRODUCED

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