

2020 SESSION

ENROLLED

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 162

Celebrating the life of Lessie Lula Jones Polk.

Agreed to by the Senate, February 27, 2020

Agreed to by the Senate, March 2, 2020

WHEREAS, Lessie Lula Jones Polk, a highly admired entrepreneur and community leader in Roanoke, died on December 26, 2019, at the age of 102; and

WHEREAS, born in Laurens County, South Carolina, in 1916, Lessie Polk was a witness to the seminal events of the 20th century, from the Great Depression and World War II to the dawn of the Internet age; and

WHEREAS, Lessie Polk owned a home-based beauty shop in Old Northeast Roanoke for more than 70 years and offered her leadership to the Modern Beauticians Club; she was also the first African American president of the Democratic Women of the Roanoke Valley and president and treasurer of the Garden Club of Virginia; and

WHEREAS, in February 2019, Lessie Polk was honored by Total Action for Progress at a ceremony highlighting the contributions of outstanding leaders in Roanoke's historically black neighborhoods; and

WHEREAS, Lessie Polk was affectionately known as "Big Mama" to both her beloved family and to the generations of Roanoke residents whose lives she touched through her generosity, grace, and dedication to service; and

WHEREAS, guided by her faith in all of her good deeds, Lessie Polk was a longtime member of Price Memorial AME Zion Church, where she played the organ for 50 years and served as treasurer, a Sunday school teacher, a missionary, and a deaconess; and

WHEREAS, predeceased by her husband, Raymond, and three children, Raymond, Jr., James, and Delores, Lessie Polk will be fondly remembered and greatly missed by her children, Ralph and Gloria, and their families; and numerous other family members and friends; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the General Assembly hereby note with great sadness the loss of Lessie Lula Jones Polk; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the family of Lessie Lula Jones Polk as an expression of the General Assembly's respect for her memory.

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