

2021 SESSION

ENROLLED

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 591

Celebrating the life of Billy Joe Roberts.

Agreed to by the House of Delegates, January 25, 2021

Agreed to by the Senate, January 28, 2021

WHEREAS, Billy Joe Roberts, a dedicated law-enforcement officer who served as longtime sheriff of the City of Hampton, died on December 26, 2020; and

WHEREAS, a native of South Carolina, Billy Joe "B.J." Roberts grew up in Hampton, where he graduated from George P. Phenix High School and earned a bachelor's degree from Hampton University; and

WHEREAS, B.J. Roberts began his law-enforcement career in 1971 as a member of the Newport News Police Department, then subsequently joined the Hampton University Police Department, rising through the ranks over the course of his 19-year career at the institution to become director of police and public safety; and

WHEREAS, in 1992, B.J. Roberts was elected as sheriff of the City of Hampton and ultimately served seven terms; he was respected for his leadership and expertise both locally and nationally, serving as president of the Virginia Sheriffs' Association and as the first African American president of the National Sheriffs' Association; and

WHEREAS, B.J. Roberts had offered his leadership to statewide college campus law-enforcement associations and as chair of the Hampton Roads Regional Jail Authority; and

WHEREAS, B.J. Roberts enjoyed fellowship and worship with the congregation of Queen Street Baptist Church and served the community as a member of several volunteer organizations, including the Hampton branch of the NAACP and the Boys & Girls Clubs of America; and

WHEREAS, among numerous awards and accolades for his work with local youths and his achievements on behalf of the community, B.J. Roberts received the Hampton Citizen of the Year award, the Role Model of the Year award from 100 Black Men of Virginia Peninsula, and the Public Service Award from CHUMS, Inc.; and

WHEREAS, B.J. Roberts will be fondly remembered and greatly missed by his siblings, Annie and Earnest, and their families, and numerous other family members, friends, and colleagues; 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 Billy Joe Roberts, a highly admired law-enforcement officer in the City of Hampton; 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 Billy Joe Roberts as an expression of the General Assembly's respect for his memory.

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