

2022 SPECIAL SESSION I

INTRODUCED

22208224D

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 682

Offered May 31, 2022

Celebrating the life of Master Sergeant Ezra M. Hill, Sr., USAF, Ret.

Patrons—Ward, Adams, D.M., Bagby, Bennett-Parker, Clark, Filler-Corn, Glass, Hayes, Herring, Hope, Hudson, Jenkins, Kory, Maldonado, Mullin, Murphy, Price, Sewell, Simonds, Torian, Watts and Willett

WHEREAS, Master Sergeant Ezra M. Hill, Sr., USAF, Ret., a patriotic veteran and highly admired member of the Newport News community, died on May 11, 2022; and

WHEREAS, a native of Newport News, Ezra Hill grew up in Washington, D.C., and enlisted in the United States Army Air Corps at Fort Meade, Maryland, in 1947; and

WHEREAS, after basic training, Ezra Hill was assigned to the former Lockbourne Air Force Base in Ohio; he was primarily assigned to crash and rescue operations but also served in the Special Services entertainment branch due to his talents as a singer; and

WHEREAS, Ezra Hill was assigned to a unit of the famed Tuskegee Airmen, units of Black aviators who served with distinction during World War II and whose achievements helped ensure the desegregation of the United States Armed Forces in 1948; and

WHEREAS, while serving at Andrews Air Force Base in Maryland in 1949, Ezra Hill became the first enlisted man and the first Black man to play base-level basketball and he was later selected to play for the United States Air Force basketball team; he also continued to participate in Special Services activities, such as Operation Happiness; and

WHEREAS, Ezra Hill was assigned to Tokyo International Airport for three years as a crash and rescue specialist, then retrained in electronics; he was assigned to the 48th Fighter Interceptor Squadron at Langley Air Force Base in Virginia as a weapons systems technician from 1960 to 1965, then worked as an electronics operational readiness inspector at McGuire Air Force Base in New Jersey until his retirement in 1967; and

WHEREAS, Ezra Hill later worked as a teacher in Newport News Public Schools for one year, then served as a computer technician supervisor at Naval Air Station Norfolk for 18 years; and

WHEREAS, Ezra Hill authored the children's book *The Black Red Tail Angels, The Story of a Tuskegee Airman and the Aviators*, to preserve the achievements of the Tuskegee Airmen while promoting childhood literacy; and

WHEREAS, in 2007, Ezra Hill and several other former Tuskegee Airmen received the Congressional Gold Medal from President George W. Bush; and

WHEREAS, after settling in Newport News, Ezra Hill and his wife Mable also established the SMF Haven of Hope Foundation to serve and support members of the Newport News community in need; and

WHEREAS, Ezra Hill will be fondly remembered and greatly missed by his beloved wife, Mable; his children, Cynthia, Ezra, Jr., and Linda, and their families; and numerous other family members, friends, and fellow veterans; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the House of Delegates hereby note with great sadness the loss of Master Sergeant Ezra M. Hill, Sr., USAF, Ret.; 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 Master Sergeant Ezra M. Hill, Sr., USAF, Ret., as an expression of the House of Delegates' respect for his memory.

INTRODUCED

HR682