

1995 SESSION

ENROLLED

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 444

Commending Judge Vernon D. Hitchings, Jr.

Agreed to by the House of Delegates, January 20, 1995

Agreed to by the Senate, January 26, 1995

WHEREAS, Virginia's Constitutional requirement for "a speedy and public trial" has long been honored in Norfolk's Traffic Court, well known for dispensing swift justice; and

WHEREAS, much of this reputation is due to the efforts of Judge Vernon D. Hitchings, Jr., who has presided in Norfolk for 40 years, since his appointment as Police Justice of the Police Court in 1954; and

WHEREAS, a Norfolk native and a graduate of Maury High School and the University of Virginia, Vernon Hitchings served as a naval intelligence officer during World War II, saw two years of combat duty in the Pacific, and earned two Presidential Unit Citations aboard the U.S.S. Fanshaw Bay; and

WHEREAS, following the war, Vernon Hitchings returned to Norfolk, where in 1946 he was appointed Assistant City Attorney, a position he held until 1953; and

WHEREAS, Judge Hitchings was reappointed to the Police Court (Traffic) in 1958; was reappointed Judge of the Municipal Traffic Court in 1962, 1966, and 1970; and was elected Chief Judge of the Norfolk General District Courts (Traffic, Criminal, and Civil Divisions) in 1973; and

WHEREAS, throughout his distinguished career, Judge Hitchings has garnered countless awards from such organizations as the American Bar Association, the Virginia State Bar Association, the Norfolk City Council, and the Tidewater Trial Lawyers Association, which, in 1990, noted his "integrity, ability, and outstanding service as Judge of the General District Court"; and

WHEREAS, for several years, Judge Hitchings was listed in the Guinness Book of World Records for having tried over one million cases between 1954 and 1977, of which over 96 percent were either unappealed or upheld on appeal; and

WHEREAS, for over 40 years, Judge Vernon Hitchings has served the people of Norfolk and the Commonwealth with unusual distinction, with unassailable integrity, and with extraordinary efficiency and consistency; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly recognize and commend the singular contributions of Judge Vernon D. Hitchings, Jr., to the cause of justice in Norfolk and the Commonwealth; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to Judge Vernon D. Hitchings, Jr., as an expression of the General Assembly's admiration of and gratitude for his stellar judicial career.

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