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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 471

Offered March 6, 2006

Celebrating the life of Linwood Brown, Jr.

Patrons—Tyler, Abbitt, Athey, BaCote, Barlow, Bulova, Byron, Callahan, Carrico, Cole, Cosgrove, Englin, Fralin, Gear, Hamilton, Howell, A.T., Hugo, Hull, Iaquinto, Jones, D.C., Jones, S.C., Kilgore, Lewis, Lingamfelter, Lohr, Marsden, Marshall, R.G., McClellan, McEachin, McQuigg, Melvin, Miller, Morgan, O'Bannon, Oder, Purkey, Putney, Rapp, Scott, E.T., Shannon, Sherwood, Sickles, Spruill, Tata, Ward, Wardrup, Ware, R.L., Welch, Wittman and Wright; Senators: Lucas, Miller and Ruff

WHEREAS, Linwood Brown, Jr., a respected activist and Brunswick County farmer, died on February 21, 2006; and

WHEREAS, born in Dinwiddie, Linwood "Buck" Brown grew up in Brunswick County, and graduated from James Solomon High School in 1957; and

WHEREAS, Linwood Brown lived in Newark, New Jersey, until 1973, when he returned to Virginia to take over the family tobacco farm in Brunswick County, which had been in the Brown family for more than a century; and

WHEREAS, Linwood Brown challenged years of discrimination against African-American farmers by the United States Department of Agriculture; and

WHEREAS, in 1996 Linwood Brown was invaluable in the formation of the National Black Farmers Association, and the organization was successful in its efforts to have the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) concede that it had for decades denied black farmers the same assistance it had given white farmers; and

WHEREAS, the USDA agreed to settle a class-action lawsuit in 1997 that the National Black Farmers Association had filed and to set aside \$2.3 billion to compensate black farmers, but the settlement was mainly for show, with only one out of 10 black farmers filing a claim ever being paid; and

WHEREAS, like many African-American farmers across the nation, Linwood Brown felt discrimination, and that black farmers and their families were categorically denied the most basic courtesies when they dealt with local USDA officials; and

WHEREAS, Linwood Brown will be respectfully remembered as an effective communicator and formidable advocate and will be missed by his family, his numerous friends and colleagues, and the African-American farmers in Virginia he represented; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly mourn the passing of a fine Virginian, Linwood Brown, Jr.; 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 Linwood Brown, Jr., as an expression of the General Assembly's respect for his memory.

INTRODUCED

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