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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 759

Offered January 17, 2007

Celebrating the life of Beatrice J. Jennings.

Patrons—Alexander, Howell, A.T., Joannou, Lewis, Melvin and Miller, P.J.; Senators: Miller and Rerras

WHEREAS, Beatrice J. Jennings of Norfolk, a respected citizen, former teacher, and outstanding advocate for affordable housing in Virginia, died on November 8, 2006; and

WHEREAS, Beatrice "Bea" Jennings was born on September 26, 1928, in Newark, New Jersey, to the late Beatrice and Thomas Christopher; and

WHEREAS, when her mother died, Beatrice Jennings moved to Norfolk, where she was raised by her aunt and uncle, the late Mae and Mack Jones; and

WHEREAS, in 1945 Bea Jennings graduated from Booker T. Washington High School at the age of 16, and in 1963 received a bachelor's degree in early childhood education from Norfolk State College, graduating second in her class; and

WHEREAS, Bea Jennings married her one and only love, the late Robert W. Jennings, Sr., and the couple had a son, the late Robert Jr., and four daughters, Beatrice, Joy, Vicki, and Candy; and

WHEREAS, dedicated to health and fitness and excellence in education for all young people, Bea Jennings served as a director for the Norfolk Recreation Department and taught elementary school in the Norfolk Public Schools for 17 years; and

WHEREAS, Bea Jennings was most proud of her mission to reinvigorate Huntersville, her childhood neighborhood, into a hospitable and thriving community; and

WHEREAS, the depressed state of her former neighborhood prompted Bea Jennings to establish Olde Huntersville Development Corporation, a nonprofit development entity that rehabilitated 120 homes in the community for families in need; and

WHEREAS, admired for her perseverance and commitment to improving the quality of life of her fellow citizens, Bea Jennings won support from the Enterprise Foundation, the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development, former governor, L. Douglas Wilder, and Governor Tim Kaine; and

WHEREAS, Bea Jennings was recognized by the South Hampton Roads Urban League and presented with the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., "I Have a Dream" award for community service and she was honored by the governor and the Virginia Housing Coalition during its 25th anniversary celebration for her valuable contributions to affordable housing; and

WHEREAS, always concerned with the welfare of her neighbors, Bea Jennings was a faithful member of Second Calvary Baptist Church and an honorary member of Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority, Inc., and an active participant in their many missions in Hampton Roads; and

WHEREAS, Bea Jennings will be remembered for her kind and generous nature and greatly missed by her four daughters; her 10 grandchildren and 15 great-grandchildren; a beloved sister and other devoted family members and friends; and the citizens of the City of Norfolk and the Commonwealth; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly mourn the passing of a revered community benefactor and fine Virginian, Beatrice J. Jennings; 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 Beatrice J. Jennings as an expression of the General Assembly's respect for her memory.

INTRODUCED

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