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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 807

Offered January 25, 2007

Celebrating the life of Morris Alexander Elam, Sr.

Patrons—Ware, O., Fralin and Griffith; Senator: Edwards

WHEREAS, Morris Alexander Elam, Sr., of Salem, a respected citizen, community supporter, and outstanding businessman for over 50 years, died on September 4, 2006; and

WHEREAS, Morris Elam was born on October 7, 1924, the son of Sadie Morris Ham and Joseph A. Elam of Salem, and he was followed by the birth of his beloved sister, Ann Gloria, in 1925; and

WHEREAS, Morris Elam spent much of his early childhood with his maternal Aunt Ellen and Uncle Robert Hale; he graduated from Lucy Addison High School in Roanoke and attended college at Tuskegee Institute in Alabama, where he worked towards an electrical engineering degree, until he was called to serve his country in the United States Army during World War II in the European Theater; and

WHEREAS, Morris Elam was destined to learn the electrical trade, however, because from the age of seven, his grandfather Edgar Lee Morris, an electrical engineer with Leas & McVitty Tanneries in Salem, taught him almost everything he knew; and

WHEREAS, under his grandfather's expert guidance, Morris Elam became one of the first independent electrical contractors in Salem in the late 1940s, and together they established the Morris-Elam Electric Company; and

WHEREAS, an adept and industrious businessman, Morris Elam continued operating the business after his grandfather died, eventually expanded Morris-Elam Electric Company into real estate development, and enjoyed working at the successful firm until his death; and

WHEREAS, Morris Elam was married for 31 years to the late Doris Mae Reid Elam, the personnel director for Total Action Against Poverty in Roanoke, a former school teacher, and an unforgettable woman, and the couple had three devoted sons Morris Jr., Michael Reid, and David Kevin; and

WHEREAS, an avid community supporter, Morris Elam was a founding board member of Salem Bank and Trust, now First National Bank; a lifetime member of the NAACP; and an active member of Omega Psi Phi, Sigma Pi Phi, and the Dinner Dance Club; and

WHEREAS, Morris Elam traveled the world, was an accomplished drummer and jazz enthusiast, and attended the Nice Jazz Festival in France for 25 years; he regularly hosted jazz icons of the Duke Ellington Band, including such notables as Paul Gonsalves, Russell Procope, Clark Terry, and Sam Woodyard; and

WHEREAS, Morris Elam will be fondly remembered and greatly missed by his sons and other loving family members, especially his eight wonderful grandchildren, and his numerous friends and admirers; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly mourn the passing of an outstanding Virginian, Morris Alexander Elam, Sr.; 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 Morris Alexander Elam, Sr., as an expression of the General Assembly's respect for his memory.

INTRODUCED

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