

## 2011 SESSION

ENROLLED

### HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 919

*Celebrating the life of William Walker Edwards, Jr.*

Agreed to by the House of Delegates, February 22, 2011  
Agreed to by the Senate, February 25, 2011

WHEREAS, William Walker Edwards, Jr., an admired City of Martinsville school board member who served for 26 years, died on July 28, 2010; and

WHEREAS, a native of Chesterfield, South Carolina, William "Bill" Edwards was born on October 14, 1921, to William Walker Edwards, Sr., and Lottie Cirlila Lowery Edwards; and

WHEREAS, a dedicated student, Bill Edwards earned a bachelor's degree from Livingston College and then moved to Winston-Salem, North Carolina, where he met his future wife, Gertrude Evelyn Gravely; and

WHEREAS, after their marriage, the couple moved to Martinsville and Bill Edwards taught science and biology at Albert Harris High School, where he was respected for his sound teaching methods and commitment to his students; and

WHEREAS, after teaching for several years, Bill Edwards moved into sales and began a long and exemplary career with Jostens, selling class rings and related graduation items; and

WHEREAS, while a teacher, Bill Edwards gained profound insight into the needs of the school system; two years before the local schools were integrated, he joined the school board as its first black member and worked alongside other key members of the community to ensure a peaceful integration; and

WHEREAS, respected and admired by his fellow board members for his objectivity and sense of fairness, Bill Edwards oversaw many changes and improvements to local schools in an effort to provide the best learning environments in which students could excel; and

WHEREAS, Bill Edwards' civic-minded spirit led him to serve as a member of the board of directors of the YMCA, life member of the NAACP, and member of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Voters League, and the local chamber of commerce; and

WHEREAS, Bill Edwards' desire to serve others grew from his deep faith, which he nurtured as a member of Grace Presbyterian Church; he served his fellow members and the church as treasurer, elder, and commissioner to the Presbytery of Southern Virginia and Presbytery of the Peaks; and

WHEREAS, a man of great integrity and high principles, Bill Edwards devoted countless hours over the years to the betterment of his community, leaving a lasting impact on the organizations and lives he touched; and

WHEREAS, a devoted family man, Bill Edwards will be fondly remembered and greatly missed by his wife, Gertrude; children, Cheryl, William, and Kenneth and their families; and numerous other family members, friends, and admirers; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly hereby note with great sadness the loss of a dedicated public servant, William Walker Edwards, 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 William Walker Edwards, Jr., as an expression of the General Assembly's respect for his memory.

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