

2018 SPECIAL SESSION I

ENROLLED

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 531

Celebrating the life of Helen Winfree Peyton Wallace.

Agreed to by the Senate, May 22, 2018

WHEREAS, Helen Winfree Peyton Wallace, a passionate educator who was one of the first teachers to integrate Westhampton Elementary School, died on May 1, 2018; and

WHEREAS, a native of New York, Helen Wallace moved to the Commonwealth with her family at a young age; graduated from Armstrong High School and was first in her class at Virginia Union University, then began her career in education as a teacher in segregated elementary schools; and

WHEREAS, in 1965, Helen Wallace was hand-selected to teach at Westhampton Elementary School, becoming one of the first African American teachers to instruct white students; shortly thereafter she became the first African American president of what is now the Richmond Education Association; and

WHEREAS, after earning a master's degree from Northwestern University, Helen Wallace served as a reading specialist for Richmond Public Schools, focusing on students with disabilities and Title I students; her model remedial reading program helped countless elementary school students throughout Richmond overcome challenges with literacy; and

WHEREAS, Helen Wallace also created the Book Bowl, which promoted literacy by encouraging students to read their own books to audiences, and a children's tour program that provided exciting trips and opportunities to students; and

WHEREAS, Helen Wallace retired as a reading specialist in 1993, after 44 years of service to Richmond Public Schools; she was also a respected realtor with more than 30 years of experience selling property; and

WHEREAS, Helen Wallace volunteered her time and leadership as an election official in Henrico County, a member of the Richmond Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta, a life member of the NAACP, and a founder and former president of the Richmond Chapter of the Continental Societies, Inc., which works on behalf of underprivileged children; and

WHEREAS, guided by her faith throughout her life, Helen Wallace was a devout Catholic who enjoyed fellowship and worship with the community as an active member of St. Paul Catholic Church; and

WHEREAS, Helen Wallace will be fondly remembered and greatly missed by her son, Walter, and his family; and numerous other family members and friends; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the Senate of Virginia hereby note with great sadness the loss of Helen Winfree Peyton Wallace, a pioneering educator and a highly admired member of the Richmond community; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the family of Helen Winfree Peyton Wallace as an expression of the Senate of Virginia's respect for her memory.

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