

2019 SESSION

ENROLLED

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 947

Celebrating the life of William Garfield Dabney.

Agreed to by the House of Delegates, February 18, 2019
Agreed to by the Senate, February 21, 2019

WHEREAS, William Garfield Dabney, a distinguished veteran and a respected business owner and community leader in Roanoke, died on December 12, 2018; and

WHEREAS, William "Bill" Garfield Dabney was born in Altavista to the late Edgar and Elinor Dabney; and

WHEREAS, during World War II, Bill Dabney joined many of the other young men of his generation in service to the nation as a member of the United States Army, rising to the rank of corporal; and

WHEREAS, Bill Dabney participated in the D-Day invasion of Normandy, France, with the 320th Barrage Balloon Battalion, the only African American unit that took part in the operation; and

WHEREAS, after his honorable military service, Bill Dabney returned to the Commonwealth and opened Dabney Floors in Roanoke, earning a reputation as a master carpet layer while serving generations of residents; and

WHEREAS, throughout his life, Bill Dabney was featured in numerous documentaries about African American soldiers during World War II, and he received awards from the Congressional Black Caucus Veterans Braintrust; and

WHEREAS, in 2009, on the 65th anniversary of D-Day, Bill Dabney returned to Normandy as one of the last surviving members of the 320th Barrage Balloon Battalion to receive the Legion of Honor, the highest award of the French military, for his gallantry in service to the people of France and the United States; and

WHEREAS, Bill Dabney will be fondly remembered and greatly missed by his loving wife of 66 years, Beulah; his sons, Vincent, Michael, and Marlon, and their families; and numerous other family members and friends; 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 William Garfield Dabney, an active member of the Roanoke community and a member of the Greatest Generation; 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 Garfield Dabney as an expression of the General Assembly's respect for his memory.

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