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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 589

Offered January 15, 2021

Celebrating the life of the Honorable Mamye E. BaCote.

Patrons—Ward, Price, Adams, D.M., Aird, Ayala, Bagby, Bell, Bulova, Carr, Carter, Cole, J.G., Cole, M.L., Convirs-Fowler, Cox, Coyner, Davis, Delaney, Fowler, Hayes, Heretick, Hope, Hudson, Hurst, Jenkins, Jones, Kory, Krizek, Levine, Lopez, McGuire, McQuinn, Mugler, Mullin, Mundon King, Orrock, Plum, Rasoul, Reid, Roem, Samirah, Scott, Simon, Simonds, Subramanyam, Torian, Tyler, Ware, Watts, Williams Graves, Wilt and Wright

WHEREAS, the Honorable Mamye E. BaCote, an inspirational educator and a highly admired public servant who represented the residents of Newport News and Hampton in the Virginia House of Delegates for more than a decade, died on December 14, 2020; and

WHEREAS, a native of Halifax County, Mamye BaCote received a bachelor's degree from Virginia Union University and a master's degree from what is now Hampton University; and

WHEREAS, while a student at Virginia Union University in 1960, Mamye BaCote played a significant role in the civil rights movement as a member of the Richmond 34, a group of students and activists who staged a sit-in at the Thalhimers lunch counter in downtown Richmond; and

WHEREAS, Mamye BaCote pursued a career in education with Newport News Public Schools, teaching social studies at Collis P. Huntington High School and Menchville High School, where she became a department head; and

WHEREAS, Mamye BaCote fostered trust among her students and worked tirelessly to help them achieve success in and out of the classroom; she inspired young adults as an adjunct professor of political science at Hampton University; and

WHEREAS, after her retirement as a teacher in 1994, Mamye BaCote was elected to the Newport News City Council and served the city in that capacity from 1996 to 2003; and

WHEREAS, desirous to be of further service to the Commonwealth, Mamye BaCote ran for and was elected to the Virginia House of Delegates in 2003 and represented the residents of the 95th District until January 2016; and

WHEREAS, Mamye BaCote introduced and supported numerous important pieces of legislation to benefit all Virginians and offered her leadership and expertise to several standing committees, including Appropriations; Health, Welfare and Institutions; and Transportation; and

WHEREAS, during her tenure as a state lawmaker, Mamye BaCote focused on education and support for public schools, gun safety measures, and helping to rehabilitate nonviolent drug offenders by funding the Newport News Drug Court; and

WHEREAS, Mamye BaCote worked diligently to cultivate mutual respect across party lines, providing both Democrats and Republicans alike with her wisdom and insights, which helped to build bipartisan consensus on critical issues; and

WHEREAS, Mamye BaCote was well-known among constituents and colleagues for her grace, dignity, and genuine kindness, but her soft-spoken nature belied her tenacity and commitment to the public good; and

WHEREAS, Mamye BaCote served the Commonwealth with the utmost integrity, dedication, and distinction and inspired other members of her community to pursue a life of public service; and

WHEREAS, Mamye BaCote enjoyed fellowship and worship with the congregation of Saint Vincent de Paul Catholic Church and shared her faith with the community through song as a member of the choir; and

WHEREAS, predeceased by her husband, Theodore, and one son, Kyle, Mamye BaCote will be fondly remembered and greatly missed by her sons, Theodore III, Derek, and Marlon, and their families; numerous other family members and friends; and colleagues on both sides of the aisle; 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 the Honorable Mamye E. BaCote, a respected public servant and former member of the Virginia House of Delegates; 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 the Honorable Mamye E. BaCote as an expression of the General Assembly's respect for her memory.