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SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 637

Offered July 17, 2024

*Celebrating the life of Colonel Porcher L. Taylor, USA, Ret.*

Patron—

WHEREAS, Colonel Porcher L. Taylor, USA, Ret., an honorable and trailblazing veteran and accomplished educator and education administrator who served his country in three major wars and was a pillar of the Petersburg community for many years, died on May 26, 2024; and

WHEREAS, after working for some time as a typesetter and pressman alongside his father at Taylor and Son Printing Company, Inc., in Jacksonville, Florida, Porcher Taylor joined the United States Navy and served his country bravely in the Pacific Theater during World War II; and

WHEREAS, following his service in the United States Navy, Porcher Taylor enrolled at the Tuskegee Institute, where he enlisted in the Tuskegee Institute Reserve Officers' Training Corps, a precursor to the famed Tuskegee Airmen, completing his training in 1949; and

WHEREAS, Porcher Taylor ultimately served 25 years in the United States Army, fighting in the Korean War as a member of the 82nd Airborne Division and later in the Vietnam War; and

WHEREAS, in 1971, Porcher Taylor notably became the first African American to be promoted to full colonel at Fort Jackson in South Carolina; and

WHEREAS, in recognition of his exemplary service, Porcher Taylor was the recipient of several military decorations, including the Legion of Merit, the Bronze Star Medal, the Meritorious Service Medal, and the Army Commendation Medal, as well as the Brigadier General Noel F. Parrish Award from the Tuskegee Airmen, Inc.; and

WHEREAS, Porcher Taylor achieved the rank of Eagle Scout with the Boy Scouts of America in his youth, and in 1994 he became the fourth Virginian to receive the prestigious Distinguished Eagle Scout Award from the National Eagle Scout Association, the organization's highest honor; and

WHEREAS, Porcher Taylor earned a master's degree in counseling from Virginia State University in the early 1960s and in 1972 became one of the first two African Americans to earn a doctoral degree in psychology from the University of South Carolina; and

WHEREAS, Porcher Taylor served as president for student affairs, director of counseling, and professor of military science and tactics at Virginia State University, contributing greatly to the success of the institution and its students; and

WHEREAS, Porcher Taylor gave generously of his time through service on dozens of boards and civic organizations over the years and was the recipient of more than 300 commendations and accolades in recognition of his charitable efforts; and

WHEREAS, guided throughout his life by his faith, Porcher Taylor enjoyed worship and fellowship with his community at St. Stephen's Episcopal Church in Petersburg and chaired the Downtown Churches United (DCU) Walk Against Hunger for 37 years, which was officially renamed the PT Taylor – DCU Walk Against Hunger in 2017 in his honor; and

WHEREAS, preceded in death by his daughter, Nolani, Porcher Taylor will be fondly remembered and dearly missed by his loving wife, Ann; his children, Porcher III, Vernita, Angela, Cheryl, and Annette, and their families; 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 Colonel Porcher L. Taylor, USA, Ret., a treasured member of the Petersburg community whose selfless service and unwavering dedication made a profound and lasting impact on countless lives; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the family of Colonel Porcher L. Taylor, USA, Ret., as an expression of the Senate of Virginia's respect for his memory.