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SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 639

Offered July 17, 2024

Celebrating the life of the Reverend Pamela Holly McLaughlin.

Patron—

WHEREAS, the Reverend Pamela Holly McLaughlin, a spiritual leader in Petersburg who was renowned for her inspirational abilities as a vocalist and highly admired for her commitment to ministry and evangelism in the Commonwealth and around the world, died on April 28, 2024; and

WHEREAS, Pamela McLaughlin was born in Washington, D.C., and grew up in Danville, where she attended Danville Public Schools and began her journey in faith as a member of Mount Sinai Glorious Church of God; and

WHEREAS, during her school years, Pamela McLaughlin cultivated her talents as a musician and received numerous awards and accolades for her performances as a soloist, pianist, and choir singer; she was well known in the community for her achievements and became the first Black homecoming queen in the history of George Washington High School in Danville; and

WHEREAS, Pamela McLaughlin earned a scholarship to what is now Hampton University and later transferred to Virginia State University, where she sang in the concert choir and joined Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.; and

WHEREAS, after receiving bachelor's and master's degrees from Virginia State University, Pamela McLaughlin pursued a career in music education; she worked at schools in Petersburg and Chesterfield County for 20 years and continued to mentor gifted young singers for many years after her retirement in 1998; and

WHEREAS, Pamela McLaughlin married her high school sweetheart, the Reverend Dr. Wesley K. McLaughlin, and used her passion for music and her deep devotion to community service to support his work in ministry from Mount Sinai Glorious Church of God in Danville to Mount Olivet Baptist Church in Petersburg; and

WHEREAS, Pamela McLaughlin was ultimately licensed and ordained as a pastor at Mount Olivet Baptist Church, and she and Wesley's son, the Reverend Jameson K. McLaughlin, followed in his parents' footsteps as a pastor; and

WHEREAS, for many years, Pamela McLaughlin served as choir director at Mount Olivet Baptist Church, organizing performances, workshops, and events, while writing original works, including the congregation's current welcome song; she and her husband also established the Chosen Generations Gospel group, which performed around the world; and

WHEREAS, Pamela McLaughlin conducted her first mission trip in 1978 to Haiti and subsequently traveled to Germany, Bermuda, Suriname, Curacao, Malawi, Uganda, Kenya, India, Thailand, and several other countries, including Ghana, where she proudly founded Grace Village International, an organization that serves inner-city families; and

WHEREAS, closer to home, Pamela McLaughlin founded Uniquely Chosen Ministries, Inc., a mentoring organization that trained and mobilized teams of international missionaries, and she provided her wise leadership to several other groups at Mount Olivet Baptist Church during her 40 years as a member of the congregation; and

WHEREAS, Pamela McLaughlin extended the reach of Mount Olivet Baptist Church by creating digital content for the church's monthly YouTube broadcast, "Necessary Voices," and a weekly podcast "Necessary Voices-Finding Your Sound"; she also authored four books that have inspired readers around the country; and

WHEREAS, Pamela McLaughlin brought joy to others through her kindness, generosity, grace, and impeccable style, and she touched countless lives in Petersburg and beyond through her legacy of servant-leadership; and

WHEREAS, Pamela McLaughlin will be fondly remembered and greatly missed by her husband, Wesley; her son, Jameson, 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 the Reverend Pamela Holly McLaughlin, a highly admired spiritual leader in Petersburg; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the family of the Reverend Pamela Holly McLaughlin as an expression of the Senate of Virginia's respect for her memory.

INTRODUCED

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