

25103914D

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 279

Offered January 15, 2025

Commending the Reverend Dr. Kirkland R. Walton.

Patrons—VanValkenburg, Aird and Bagby

WHEREAS, for 40 years, the Reverend Dr. Kirkland R. Walton has provided the congregation at St. Peter Baptist Church in Glen Allen with uplifting spiritual guidance, joyful occasions for worship and fellowship, and abundant opportunities for community outreach; and

WHEREAS, after graduating from Maggie L. Walker High School in Richmond in 1969 and earning a bachelor's degree in geology from Virginia State University in 1973, Kirkland Walton enjoyed a successful career as a geologist, becoming the first African American petroleum geologist with the Gulf Oil Company and the first African American groundwater geologist with the Commonwealth's State Water Control Board; and

WHEREAS, Kirkland Walton graduated with honors from what is today the Samuel DeWitt Proctor School of Theology at Virginia Union University in 1979 with a master's degree in divinity, and he became one of the first seven students to earn a doctor of ministry degree from the institution in 1993; and

WHEREAS, Kirkland Walton was licensed to the Gospel Ministry in 1977 and ordained in 1980 by the First Baptist Church of South Richmond, where he served as the minister of education for more than three years before becoming the first full-time pastor of St. Peter Baptist Church in 1985; and

WHEREAS, with great vision and dedication, Kirkland Walton has nurtured the growth and development of St. Peter Baptist Church over his tenure, guiding expansion projects that created new educational and administrative spaces, a child development center, and a new sanctuary; and

WHEREAS, Kirkland Walton has mentored aspiring faith leaders as a faculty member of the Samuel DeWitt Proctor School of Theology at Virginia Union University, where he is one of six scholars in context and a member of the council of elders; and through his many workshops across the Commonwealth; and

WHEREAS, Kirkland Walton has given generously of his time to support local faith communities as president of the Henrico Minister's Fellowship and the Laurel Glen Allen Ministerial Alliance; and

WHEREAS, Kirkland Walton has advanced the efforts of the Baptist General Convention of Virginia in various capacities, including as two-time chairperson for its Commission of Christian Education, as dean and assistant dean of its Congress of Christian Education, and as a contributing writer for numerous publications; and

WHEREAS, Kirkland Walton has served as a faith leader on the national level through his work with the Congress of Christian Education of the National Baptist Convention and as the featured preacher for the American Baptist Churches USA in Greenlake, Wisconsin; and

WHEREAS, over the past 40 years, Kirkland Walton has embodied the highest virtues of those who are called to preach and lead others in their spiritual journeys, earning the esteem and admiration of all Virginians; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commend the Reverend Dr. Kirkland R. Walton on the occasion of his 40th anniversary as a pastor of St. Peter Baptist Church in Glen Allen; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the Reverend Dr. Kirkland R. Walton as an expression of the General Assembly's respect and high regard for his legacy of service.

INTRODUCED

SJ279