

2025 SESSION

ENROLLED

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 434

Commending the Honorable William Ferguson Reid, M.D.

Agreed to by the Senate, February 19, 2025
Agreed to by the House of Delegates, February 20, 2025

WHEREAS, the Honorable William Ferguson Reid, M.D., an outstanding physician, groundbreaking civil rights activist, and community leader, celebrates his 100th birthday in 2025; and

WHEREAS, Ferguson “Fergie” Reid grew up in the Jackson Ward neighborhood of Richmond and graduated from Armstrong High School and Virginia Union University; he continued his education by earning a medical degree from Howard University, then completed his medical internship and residency at Homer G. Phillips Hospital in St. Louis, Missouri; and

WHEREAS, Fergie Reid subsequently enlisted in the United States Navy and was assigned to the 1st Marine Division during the Korean War, then served at Bethesda Naval Hospital in Maryland; and

WHEREAS, Fergie Reid returned to Richmond and opened a private surgical practice that served the community for more than 20 years; he also provided his leadership and expertise to several local hospitals during the 1950s and 1960s, including Richmond Memorial Hospital, Richmond Community Hospital, Retreat for the Sick Hospital, the Medical College of Virginia, and St. Mary's Hospital; and

WHEREAS, as the first Black surgeon in Richmond, Fergie Reid weathered many barriers to practice his profession; he was rejected for membership in the medical society due to his race; he was denied staff privileges at area hospitals because staff privileges were extended only to members of the medical society; and because he was unable to practice in local hospitals, he could not obtain the requisite recommendations of five area surgeons to apply for membership in the American College of Surgeons until the staffs of area hospitals were desegregated; and

WHEREAS, Fergie Reid led the fight to desegregate medicine in Richmond, opening doors for Black physicians to obtain membership in local, state, and national medical education associations and societies; and

WHEREAS, Fergie Reid cofounded the Richmond Crusade for Voters in 1956 and began volunteering his leadership and expertise to civic organizations at the local and state levels; and

WHEREAS, Fergie Reid ran for and was elected to the Virginia House of Delegates in 1967, making history as the first Black member of the General Assembly since the Reconstruction Era; and

WHEREAS, as a member of state government at that time, Fergie Reid often endured with dignity and grace the very exclusion that he had fought to eradicate in open society; he pressed on with his cause of equality and freedom and was instrumental in desegregating the page program to provide opportunities for minorities and females to serve as pages in the General Assembly; and

WHEREAS, Fergie Reid ably represented the residents of the City of Richmond and Henrico County in the 35th House District until 1973, during which time he introduced and supported numerous pieces of legislation to benefit his constituents and the Commonwealth as a whole; and

WHEREAS, in 1977, Fergie Reid began working for the U.S. Department of State as a regional medical officer; and

WHEREAS, on Fergie Reid's 90th birthday, the 90 for 90 Campaign was launched in his honor, imploring volunteers throughout the Commonwealth to inspire other Virginians to fulfill their civic duty to vote by registering 90 new voters in each precinct every year; and

WHEREAS, Fergie Reid has served the Richmond community and the Commonwealth with distinction, inspiring others through his personal integrity and unwavering commitment to servant-leadership; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commend the Honorable William Ferguson Reid, M.D., on the occasion of his 100th birthday; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the Honorable William Ferguson Reid, M.D., as an expression of the General Assembly's admiration for his lifetime of personal and professional achievements.

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