

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 675

Celebrating the life of Dr. La Francis Rodgers-Rose.

Agreed to by the House of Delegates, February 17, 2025

WHEREAS, Dr. La Francis Rodgers-Rose, a distinguished scholar, educator, and advocate for Black women and families, died on November 10, 2024, following a courageous two-year battle with myelodysplastic syndrome; and

WHEREAS, born in Norfolk on July 19, 1936, to Carroll M. Rodgers and Beulah P. Rodgers, La Francis Rodgers-Rose was raised in segregated Portsmouth and became a proud graduate of I.C. Norcom High School with the class of 1954; and

WHEREAS, La Francis Rodgers-Rose pursued higher education with excellence, earning a bachelor's degree from Morgan State University in 1958, a master's degree from Fisk University in 1960, and a doctorate from the University of Iowa in 1964, all in the field of sociology, making her a trailblazer in the discipline; and

WHEREAS, over the course of more than three decades, La Francis Rodgers-Rose was a dedicated professor, teaching sociology and African American Studies at institutions such as St. Olaf College, Case Western Reserve University, Rutgers University, the University of Pennsylvania, and Drew University, as well as spending 15 years at Princeton University, where she introduced the university's first-ever course focusing on Black women in 1975; and

WHEREAS, La Francis Rodgers-Rose was a prolific scholar and thought leader, lecturing extensively on Black history and culture, Black women, Black families, Black identity, rites of passage, and cultural diversity; she also edited *The Black Woman*, the first comprehensive social science volume in Black women's studies, written by Black women about Black women; and

WHEREAS, a leader in her field, La Francis Rodgers-Rose served as the national president of the Association of Black Sociologists and the Association of Social Behavioral Scientists and was the founder and president emerita of the International Black Women's Congress, an organization dedicated to the empowerment and advancement of Black women; and

WHEREAS, La Francis Rodgers-Rose's profound contributions to academia, community service, and cultural preservation were recognized with numerous honors, including being named a Fulbright Fellow to Africa and a Distinguished Sociology Scholar; she was enstooled in a traditional ceremony as Nana Obaapanyin Akosua Asantewaa Ofosua I of Aburi, Ghana, in 1993, further solidifying her legacy of leadership and cultural advocacy; and

WHEREAS, La Francis Rodgers-Rose was a devoted member of Iota Phi Lambda Sorority, Inc., and Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., two organizations that exemplify service, sisterhood, and scholarship, values that she embodied throughout her life; and

WHEREAS, La Francis Rodgers-Rose was the recipient of a life-giving heart transplant on October 19, 2002, a testament to both her resilience and the power of medical advancements; and

WHEREAS, La Francis Rodgers-Rose was a beloved mother, grandmother, great-grandmother, sister, and friend, who left behind a lasting legacy of academic excellence, cultural pride, and unwavering advocacy for justice and equity; and

WHEREAS, La Francis Rodgers-Rose is survived by her sister, Cynthia Rodgers; her children, Henry D. Rose and Valija C. Rose, and their spouses; her adopted son, Brian Williams; six grandchildren; two great-grandchildren; and a host of nieces, nephews, cousins, and friends who cherish her memory; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the House of Delegates hereby note with great sadness the loss of Dr. La Francis Rodgers-Rose, who made extraordinary contributions to education, sociology, and the empowerment of Black women and families; 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 Dr. La Francis Rodgers-Rose as an expression of the House of Delegates' profound respect for her memory and deepest condolences.

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