

2024 SPECIAL SESSION I

ENROLLED

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 882

Celebrating the life of the Honorable Willard H. Douglas, Jr.

Agreed to by the House of Delegates, April 2, 2025

WHEREAS, the Honorable Willard H. Douglas, Jr., a trailblazing jurist who broke down many racial barriers in the legal profession and was the first Black Virginian to serve as a full-time judge in the Commonwealth, died on February 16, 2025; and

WHEREAS, Willard Douglas grew up in Amherst County and served the nation as a member of the United States Marine Corps during the Korean War; and

WHEREAS, after returning from his military service, Willard Douglas earned a bachelor's degree from Virginia Union University and a law degree from Howard University; he worked as an attorney on the United States Commission on Civil Rights and practiced law with the firm Hill, Tucker & Marsh; and

WHEREAS, Willard Douglas subsequently joined the Richmond Commonwealth's Attorney's Office, becoming the first Black assistant prosecutor in the city; and

WHEREAS, in 1974, Willard Douglas made history again when he was appointed as a judge of the Richmond Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court, paving the way for future generations of Black judges across the Commonwealth; and

WHEREAS, Willard Douglas presided over the court with great fairness and wisdom, serving the Richmond community and the Commonwealth with integrity, dedication, and distinction; and

WHEREAS, outside of his legal career, Willard Douglas enhanced local life as a leader in several charitable, community, and professional organizations; and

WHEREAS, Willard Douglas will be fondly remembered and greatly missed by numerous family members and friends; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the House of Delegates hereby note with great sadness the loss of the Honorable Willard H. Douglas, Jr., a former judge of the Richmond Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court and the first full-time Black judge in the Commonwealth; 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 the Honorable Willard H. Douglas, Jr., as an expression of the House of Delegates' respect for his memory.

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