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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 86

Offered January 23, 2026

*Celebrating the life of Mattie L. Palmore.*

Patrons—Krizek and McClure

WHEREAS, Mattie L. Palmore, a passionate advocate for victims of domestic abuse and a local icon in Gum Springs who helped build a stronger, more equitable community, died on October 30, 2025; and

WHEREAS, Mattie Palmore grew up in Washington, D.C., and graduated from Dunbar Senior High School in 1966; she held numerous jobs in the area and was an active volunteer who planned community events and supported young people through programs at the Thomas Payne Recreation Center; and

WHEREAS, in 1982, Mattie Palmore and her children relocated to Gum Springs, where she initially worked at the Gum Springs Community Center, then became director of the Gum Springs Senior Center, and later served as director of a program supporting homeless families at Good Shepherd Housing; she served on the Gum Springs Advisory Board, the New Gum Springs Civic Association, and the local branch of the NAACP, advancing programs that supported women, children, and families; and

WHEREAS, in the mid-1990s, Mattie Palmore made history as one of the first Black women appointed by the Supreme Court of Virginia as a magistrate in Fairfax County, in which capacity she served the community with integrity and compassion; and

WHEREAS, Mattie Palmore's willingness to share stories of her own experience with domestic violence helped other women seek assistance and find healing, which ultimately inspired her to take a more active role in domestic violence advocacy; she cofounded the Mount Vernon Women's Group to provide resources for women facing abuse and worked with county officials to establish a women's shelter in Mount Vernon known as Artemis House; and

WHEREAS, Mattie Palmore promoted positive relationships between law-enforcement officers and members of the public through her work with the Mount Vernon District Community Advisory Committee; and

WHEREAS, Mattie Palmore also represented the Mount Vernon District on the Fairfax-Falls Church Community Services Board, where she provided insights and recommendations on mental health services that led to the adoption of beneficial programs statewide; and

WHEREAS, in addition to her advocacy work, Mattie Palmore served as cheer commissioner for the Gum Springs Youth Athletic Association and coached a championship cheer team that competed in a national competition in 1990; and

WHEREAS, among many awards and accolades, Mattie Palmore was honored as Lady Fairfax for the Mount Vernon District in 2017, received the Gerry Hyland Humanitarian Award from United Community in 2020, and was recognized for her commitment to service by the NAACP in 2024; and

WHEREAS, Mattie Palmore will be fondly remembered and greatly missed by her children, D. R. Bacife, Gavin Palmore, and Ayannah Arrington, and their families, and numerous other family members and friends; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly hereby note with great sadness the loss of Mattie L. Palmore, a pillar of the Gum Springs community who touched countless lives through her kindness, grace, and dedication to servant leadership; 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 Mattie L. Palmore as an expression of the General Assembly's respect for her memory.

INTRODUCED

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