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SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 162

Offered March 3, 2026

*Celebrating the life of Elton Smith, Jr.*

Patrons—Stuart; Delegate: Kent

WHEREAS, Elton Smith, Jr., an honorable veteran, distinguished educator, trailblazing education administrator, and beloved member of the Kilmarnock community, died on January 14, 2025; and

WHEREAS, a native of Lancaster County, Elton Smith was drafted into the United States Army in 1945 while still in high school, Elton Smith served his country with honor and distinction for two years before returning to graduate from the former A.T. Wright High School in White Stone; and

WHEREAS, following his graduation, Elton Smith spent time working in the local menhaden fishing industry before earning a bachelor's degree in sociology from Virginia Union University; and

WHEREAS, Elton Smith became an educator in Lancaster County, and he worked tirelessly to help his students achieve success both in and out of the classroom; and

WHEREAS, Elton Smith later earned a master's degree in school administration from what is today Hampton University and took graduate courses in school administration at The College of William and Mary before embarking on the next chapter of his career as a school administrator; and

WHEREAS, after serving as a principal and superintendent, Elton Smith made history as the first Black superintendent in the Commonwealth when he became the Superintendent of King and Queen County Public Schools ; and

WHEREAS, Elton Smith advanced education in the Commonwealth as a member of the National Association of School Administrators and the National Association of Elementary and Secondary School Principals; and

WHEREAS, Elton Smith devoted himself to preserving the rich heritage and culture of the Northern Neck's menhaden fishing industry as a proud member of the Northern Neck Chantey Singers; and

WHEREAS, guided throughout his life by his faith, Elton Smith enjoyed worship and fellowship with his community at Mount Vernon Baptist Church in White Stone, where he served as a deacon; and

WHEREAS, in recognition of his achievements as a faith leader and in service to the community, Elton Smith was presented an honorary doctorate of pedagogy from the Virginia University of Lynchburg in 2003; and

WHEREAS, preceded in death by his loving wife, Leora, Elton Smith will be fondly remembered and dearly missed by his children, Elton III, Ronald, and Michelle, and their families and by numerous other family members and friends; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the General Assembly hereby note with great sadness the loss of Elton Smith, Jr., a pioneering education administrator and cherished member of the Kilmarnock community whose legacy of integrity, service, and dedication will forever inspire all who knew him; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the family of Elton Smith, Jr. as an expression of the General Assembly's respect for his memory.

INTRODUCED

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