

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 138

Commending the Honorable Johnny E. Morrison.

Agreed to by the Senate, March 5, 2026
Agreed to by the House of Delegates, March 9, 2026

WHEREAS, the Honorable Johnny E. Morrison, a former Commonwealth's attorney for the City of Portsmouth and chief judge of the Portsmouth Circuit Court who earned the respect of colleagues, attorneys, and citizens alike through his fairness, professionalism, and commitment to justice, retired in December 2025 after nearly 45 years of service to the Commonwealth; and

WHEREAS, born in North Carolina, Johnny Morrison relocated to Norfolk with his family in 1955 and graduated from I.C. Norcom High School; he received a scholarship to attend Washington and Lee University with the first class of Black students to both study and live on campus in 1970 and established the Student Association for Black Unity to address racial issues at the institution; and

WHEREAS, after receiving his law degree from the Washington and Lee University School of Law, Johnny Morrison joined the Legal Aid Society of Roanoke Valley, served as an assistant Commonwealth's attorney in Norfolk and Portsmouth, then worked in private practice; and

WHEREAS, Johnny Morrison was elected Commonwealth's attorney of Portsmouth in 1981 and served in that capacity until he was selected as a judge of the Portsmouth Circuit Court of the Third Judicial Circuit of Virginia in 1991; and

WHEREAS, throughout his tenure on the bench, Johnny Morrison upheld the highest standards of integrity, impartiality, and fidelity to the Constitution of Virginia and the laws of the Commonwealth, ensuring the courts under his leadership operated with dignity and efficiency; and

WHEREAS, Johnny Morrison's service reflects his extraordinary personal character and compassion; his accomplishments strengthened public trust in the judiciary and contributed meaningfully to the administration of justice in the City of Portsmouth and the Commonwealth as a whole; and

WHEREAS, throughout his career, Johnny Morrison has been steadfastly supported by his wife, Cynthia P. Morrison, clerk of the Portsmouth City Circuit Court, whose own service has also contributed to the effective administration of justice; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commend the Honorable Johnny E. Morrison on the occasion of his retirement as a judge of the Portsmouth Circuit Court of the Third Judicial Circuit of Virginia; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the Honorable Johnny E. Morrison as an expression of the General Assembly's admiration for his legacy of principled leadership, quiet strength, and dedication to public service.

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