ENROLLED

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 461

Commending Vivian Stephenson.

Agreed to by the House of Delegates, March 13, 2026

WHEREAS, Vivian Stephenson was born in 1926 in Portsmouth and has lived a remarkable life of resilience and faith that has spanned a century of profound historical change; and

WHEREAS, Vivian Stephenson grew up during the era of segregation in the Commonwealth and witnessed firsthand the transformation of American society, demonstrating strength, perseverance, and grace in the face of many challenges; and

WHEREAS, throughout her lifetime, Vivian Stephenson has exemplified the strong values instilled in her by her parents, including putting God first, treating people with kindness and respect, maintaining integrity, and living responsibly; and

WHEREAS, Vivian Stephenson began her working life at the Pete Ice Cream Factory and later attended beauty school, demonstrating determination and independence while building a life through hard work and dedication; and

WHEREAS, Vivian Stephenson's life of faith has been reflected through her devotion to church and community, including service and fellowship with True Vine Pentecostal Church in Portsmouth; Shiloh Missionary Baptist Church in Anchorage, Alaska, where she faithfully worshiped for 32 years; and New Mt. Vernon Baptist Church in Portsmouth; and

WHEREAS, Vivian Stephenson built an extraordinary family legacy through love, faith, and commitment, becoming the proud matriarch of a family of 14 children, 41 grandchildren, 61 great-grandchildren, and 15 great-great-grandchildren and a living testament to the strength and unity of her family; and

WHEREAS, Vivian Stephenson has devoted her life to caring for others, bringing family together, and expressing love through cooking, hospitality, and nurturing generations of loved ones; and

WHEREAS, throughout her century of life, Vivian Stephenson has witnessed significant milestones in American and Virginia history, from segregation to greater equality, and has lived to see Black women and men serve in positions of leadership and public office; and

WHEREAS, Vivian Stephenson's wisdom for future generations emphasizes faith, integrity, and responsibility, reminding others to “always put God first, treat people right, and take care of yourself”; and

WHEREAS, Vivian Stephenson celebrates her 100th birthday in 2026, marking a lifetime of faith, resilience, family devotion, and community impact that has touched countless lives; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, That Vivian Stephenson hereby be commended on the joyful occasion of her 100th birthday to honor her remarkable life, enduring faith, and extraordinary family legacy; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to Vivian Stephenson as an expression of the House of Delegates' admiration and appreciation for her lifetime of strength, wisdom, and service.