

# 2026 SPECIAL SESSION I

ENROLLED

## HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 2179

*Commending Grady James, Ph.D.*

Agreed to by the House of Delegates, June 22, 2026

WHEREAS, on January 26, 2026, Grady James, Ph.D., celebrated his 100th birthday, marking a century of remarkable achievements, service, and impact in the fields of education and broadcasting; and

WHEREAS, a native of Ocala, Florida, Dr. James served two years in the United States Army before pursuing higher education; in 1960, he came to Norfolk State University (NSU), then a division of Virginia State University, where he earned advanced degrees and began a distinguished career that would help train television professionals employed by major broadcast companies across the nation; and

WHEREAS, Dr. James was originally hired as director of NSU's Educational Media Center, a position similar to one he previously held at Southern University in Baton Rouge, Louisiana; and

WHEREAS, several years later, Dr. James designed NSU's first television studios, equipping them with color cameras, teleprompters, appropriate lighting systems, and professional news sets; these studios became essential laboratories for teaching mass communications courses and preparing generations of students for careers in media; and

WHEREAS, Dr. James had always been interested in both teaching at a Historically Black College or University and working in broadcasting, and he found the opportunity to pursue both passions at NSU and WTAR radio and television, the CBS affiliate in Norfolk; and

WHEREAS, while at WTAR, Dr. James earned five awards for excellence in radio and television programming, and in 1971, his documentary, *The State of the Welfare*, was recognized as the best in-depth radio documentary of the year; and

WHEREAS, after WTAR became WTKR, Dr. James continued to shape local media and storytelling, while also mentoring and inspiring students pursuing careers in journalism and broadcasting; and

WHEREAS, Dr. James retired from NSU in 2000, but he has continued to support and encourage students as professor emeritus; and

WHEREAS, Dr. James' career reflects a rare blend of academic excellence, media influence, and meaningful community impact; in recognition of his extraordinary contributions to broadcasting and education, he was honored with the Distinguished Virginian Award by the Virginia Association of Broadcasters in 2023; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, That Grady James, Ph.D., hereby be commended on the occasion of his 100th birthday; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to Grady James, Ph.D., as an expression of the House of Delegates' admiration for his legacy of service to the Norfolk State University community and contributions to broadcast media in the Hampton Roads Region.

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