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SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 611

Offered September 6, 2023

Celebrating the life of Dr. Golden Bethune-Hill.

Patrons—Locke and Deeds

WHEREAS, Dr. Golden Bethune-Hill, an esteemed health care executive, devoted and accomplished advocate for health equity and social justice, and beloved member of the Hampton Roads community, died on April 29, 2024; and

WHEREAS, after graduating from the historic George W. Carver High School in Newport News, Dr. Golden Bethune-Hill furthered her education by earning a bachelor's degree in nursing from North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University and a master's degree in nursing administration from Virginia Commonwealth University and by completing a nurse executives fellowship program at the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Golden Bethune-Hill began her distinguished career in health care as a staff nurse at Montefiore Medical Center in New York and thereafter became the first African American to serve as director of nursing at Riverside Regional Medical Center in Newport News; and

WHEREAS, following a number of leadership roles in New Jersey and Lynchburg, Dr. Golden Bethune-Hill ultimately returned to Newport News in 2005 as the first Black executive vice president of the Riverside Health System and chief executive of Riverside Regional Medical Center, where she stayed until her retirement in 2010; and

WHEREAS, recognizing the need to improve health care for underserved individuals and families in the Hampton Roads area, Dr. Golden Bethune-Hill co-founded the Community Free Clinic of Newport News in 2010, which was renamed the Charlie W. and Golden Bethune Hill Community Health Clinic in 2022 in her honor; and

WHEREAS, a tireless advocate for social justice and fair access to voting, Dr. Golden Bethune-Hill was the lead plaintiff in *Bethune-Hill v. the Virginia State Board of Elections*, cementing her place in the history of the civil rights movement; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Golden Bethune-Hill made an outsized impact in her community over the years through her leadership positions with several prominent social organizations, including the Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., and The Links, Inc.; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Golden Bethune-Hill was the recipient of many accolades in recognition of her leadership and service, including honors from the Virginia Center for Inclusive Communities, the United Negro College Fund, and Providence Bible College and Theological Seminary, which granted her an honorary doctorate in 2022; and

WHEREAS, guided throughout her life by her faith, Dr. Golden Bethune-Hill enjoyed worship and fellowship with her community at Carver Memorial Presbyterian Church in Newport News, where she served as both a deacon and elder; and

WHEREAS, preceded in death by her first husband, Vernon Bethune, Dr. Golden Bethune-Hill will be fondly remembered and dearly missed by her loving husband, Charlie W. Hill; her daughters, Rahcyne, Caroline, Charlene, and Verna, and their families; and numerous other family members and friends; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the Senate of Virginia hereby note with great sadness the loss of Dr. Golden Bethune-Hill, a pillar of the Hampton Roads community whose legacy of compassionate service will inspire others for generations to come; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the family of Dr. Golden Bethune-Hill as an expression of the Senate of Virginia's respect for her lasting legacy.

INTRODUCED

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