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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 185

Offered February 2, 2022

Celebrating the life of Mildred Fayette Odom Graves.

Patrons—Williams Graves, Bennett-Parker and Scott, D.L.

WHEREAS, Mildred Fayette Odom Graves, an esteemed educator and businesswoman and a beloved member of the Norfolk community, died on January 13, 2022; and

WHEREAS, a native of Norfolk, Mildred Graves graduated with honors from Booker T. Washington High School before earning a bachelor's degree in education from the former Virginia State College, where she was a member of the dance and drama clubs; and

WHEREAS, for more than 25 years, Mildred Graves enjoyed a distinguished career as an educator with Norfolk Public Schools, contributing greatly to the success and well-being of her many students; and

WHEREAS, in 1953, Mildred Graves and her husband, Thomas, founded Graves Funeral Home in Norfolk to provide the African American community in Hampton Roads with a first-class establishment for its funeral needs; and

WHEREAS, Mildred Graves's legacy will endure through Graves Funeral Home, which continues to be owned and operated by her son and grandsons and which will remain a pillar of the community for many years to come; and

WHEREAS, a devoted wife and mother, Mildred Graves had the wonderful pleasure of watching her children reach remarkable heights in their careers, with a son who played for the world-champion Pittsburgh Steelers of the National Football League and a daughter who was a principal dancer for the prestigious Dance Theatre of Harlem; and

WHEREAS, preceded in death by her loving husband, Thomas Graves, Jr., Mildred Graves will be fondly remembered and dearly missed by her children, Thomas Graves III and Lorraine Graves; her daughter-in-law Delegate Angelia Williams Graves; her grandsons, Thomas Graves IV and Jason Graves; and her great-grandsons, Thomas V and Aston; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly hereby note with great sadness the loss of Mildred Fayette Odom Graves, accomplished wife, mother, educator and businesswoman whose dignity, humility, and grace were an inspiration to all who knew her; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the family of Mildred Fayette Odom Graves as an expression of the General Assembly's respect for her memory.

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