22106657D

1 **HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 62**
2 Offered February 25, 2022
3 *Celebrating the life of Marie Frankie Muse Freeman.*
4 _____

Patron—Mundon King

5 _____

6 WHEREAS, Marie Frankie Muse Freeman, an esteemed attorney who made history as the first
7 woman to be appointed to the United States Commission on Civil Rights, died on January 12, 2018; and
8 WHEREAS, born and raised in Danville, Frankie Muse Freeman enrolled at the Hampton Institute at
9 the age of 16 and attended from 1933 to 1936, then later earned a law degree in 1947 from the Howard
10 University School of Law, where she was a member of the Epsilon Sigma Iota Sorority; and
11 WHEREAS, Frankie Muse Freeman established her own private practice in 1948, specializing in pro
12 bono, divorce, and criminal cases, and after two years ventured into the field of civil rights law when
13 she became legal counsel to the NAACP legal team that filed suit against the St. Louis Board of
14 Education in 1949; and
15 WHEREAS, Frankie Muse Freeman was the lead attorney in 1954 for the landmark NAACP case
16 *Davis et al. v. the St. Louis Housing Authority*, which ended legal racial discrimination in public housing
17 within the city; and
18 WHEREAS, Frankie Muse Freeman was nominated by President Lyndon Johnson in 1964 to serve as
19 a member of the United States Commission on Civil Rights and was approved by the United States
20 Senate the same year, making history as the first woman to serve on the commission; and
21 WHEREAS, Frankie Muse Freeman would be subsequently reappointed to the United States
22 Commission on Civil Right by Presidents Richard Nixon, Gerald Ford, and Jimmy Carter, holding the
23 position until 1979; that same year, she was appointed as inspector general for the Community Services
24 Administration, a position she carried out for the remainder of President Jimmy Carter's term; and
25 WHEREAS, following her service in the federal government, Frankie Muse Freeman returned to St.
26 Louis to practice law and at the age of 90 was still practicing with Montgomery Hollie & Associates,
27 L.L.C.; and
28 WHEREAS, in 1982, Frankie Muse Freeman joined 15 other former federal officials to form a
29 bipartisan Citizens' Commission on Civil Rights, a group committed to ending racial discrimination and
30 proffering remedies to counteract its effects; and
31 WHEREAS, in recognition of her leadership role in the civil rights movement, Frankie Muse
32 Freeman was inducted into the International Civil Rights Walk of Fame at the Martin Luther King Jr.
33 National Historic Site in Atlanta in 2007; and
34 WHEREAS, Frankie Muse Freeman's expertise was valued by many, including President Barack
35 Obama, who appointed her to serve as a member of the Commission on Presidential Scholars in 2015;
36 and
37 WHEREAS, an engaged member of the community, Frankie Muse Freeman's many volunteer
38 activities included adult Sunday school classes at Washington Tabernacle Missionary Baptist Church in
39 St. Louis and service on the board of the World Affairs Council of St. Louis, furthering the
40 organization's mission to promote understanding, engagement, relationships, and leadership in world
41 affairs; and
42 WHEREAS, the 14th national president of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., Frankie Muse Freeman
43 published her memoir, *A Song of Faith and Hope*, in 2003; and
44 WHEREAS, preceded in death by her husband and son, Frankie Muse Freeman is fondly
45 remembered and dearly missed by her daughter, grandchildren, and numerous other family members and
46 friends; now, therefore, be it
47 RESOLVED, That the House of Delegates hereby note with great sadness the loss of Marie Frankie
48 Muse Freeman, a prominent civil rights attorney whose professional accomplishments made an impact
49 on countless lives; and, be it
50 RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution
51 for presentation to the family of Marie Frankie Muse Freeman as an expression of the House of
52 Delegates' respect for her memory.