

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 871
By DeBerry L

A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of the Honorable Odell Horton.

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly were greatly saddened to learn of the passing of Judge Odell Horton; and

WHEREAS, Judge Horton was an exemplary public servant and consummate professional who worked assiduously to improve the quality of life for his fellow citizens in numerous capacities; and

WHEREAS, Odell Horton was the first black Federal Judge and Assistant United States Attorney in Tennessee since Reconstruction; and

WHEREAS, Judge Horton began his career in law in 1957, opening a one-room law office on Beale Street in Memphis; and

WHEREAS, an unparalleled leader in the African-American community of Tennessee, Judge Horton served as an Assistant United States Attorney (1962-1967), the City of Memphis's Hospital and Health Services Director (1968), a Criminal Court Judge (1969-1970), President of LeMoyne-Owen College (1970-1974), and a Federal Bankruptcy Judge (1976-1980); and

WHEREAS, in 1979, Judge Odell Horton was nominated by President Jimmy Carter and confirmed by the United States Senate for the United States District Court and, from 1980 to 1997, he served as an United States District Court Judge with the utmost professionalism, integrity, ability, and character; and

WHEREAS, during his tenure on the bench, Judge Horton was possessed of a calm and deliberate demeanor and he often showed a patient concern in his instruction to juries, a quality which imbued his courtroom with understanding and professionalism; and

WHEREAS, deeply devoted to his family, Judge Horton always endeavored to remain true to family values of the highest order; and

WHEREAS, his professional accomplishments aside, Odell Horton was most thankful for the love and companionship he shared with his wife of fifty-two years, Evie; their marriage was blessed with two sons, Odell, Jr., and Christopher and two grandchildren; and

WHEREAS, Judge Horton epitomized the spirit and commitment that are characteristic of a true Tennessean; and

WHEREAS, Odell Horton leaves behind an indelible legacy of integrity and probity in public life, compassion and loyalty in private life, and diligence and dedication in all his chosen endeavors; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that this General Assembly pause to remember the bountiful life of this exceptional public servant and human being; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED FOURTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we honor the memory of Odell Horton, reflecting fondly upon his immense contributions to the African-American community and to the State of Tennessee, his impeccable character, and his stalwart commitment to living the examined life with courage and conviction.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we express our sympathy and offer our condolences to the family of Judge Horton.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.