

HOUSE RESOLUTION 15

By Staples

A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of Sheryl Clark Rollins of Knoxville.

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly were greatly saddened to learn of the passing of Sheryl Clark Rollins; and

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

WHEREAS, a native of Knoxville, Ms. Rollins was born on November 11, 1949, the only daughter of George and Patricia Wright; after graduating from Holston High School, she attended the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, where she graduated *magna cum laude* with a Bachelor of Science degree. She received her Doctorate of Jurisprudence from the University of Tennessee School of Law in 1992; and

WHEREAS, an academic of the highest order, Sheryl Rollins attended the Institute of International and Comparative Law at Oxford University in Oxford, England, in 1991, and she was one of fifty scholars who participated in Harvard University's Symposium on W.E.B. Du Bois at the Sorbonne University in Paris, France. She was also honored as a Mellon Fellow in Public Interest Law and a Patricia Roberts Harris Fellow; and

WHEREAS, Sheryl Rollins was a servant-hearted leader who devoted her life to helping others; for more than forty years, she was a public servant, a fighter for justice, a civil rights activist, and an advocate for the most vulnerable populations in her community and throughout the world; and

WHEREAS, during her illustrious career as a practitioner of law, she specialized in Title VII Employment Discrimination Law; she worked closely with former NAACP presidents Dewey

Roberts and Sarah Moore Green to help cities in Northeast Tennessee who experienced civil rights injustices; and

WHEREAS, wholly devoted to giving back to her community, Ms. Rollins served as president of the Knoxville Branch of the NAACP and a member of the Knox County Public Library Board of Trustees, Knox County 911 Personnel Committee, Knoxville Museum of Art, and Beck Cultural Exchange Center; and

WHEREAS, she also served as a longtime member of the Knoxville Chapter of Links, Inc.; the Alliance of Doctoral Women, which she served as vice president; and Top Ladies of Distinction, which she served as president; she was a charter member of the Psi Zeta Omega chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., and was recently included in *Oral History of Southern Women and Women's Rights*, published by the University of North Carolina Press; and

WHEREAS, often recognized for her leadership and good works, Sheryl Rollins was a finalist in the YWCA's Tribute to Women, Psi Zeta Omega Chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority's 2009 Soror of the Year, and the 2009 recipient of the Martin Luther King Commemorative Commission Advocacy Award; and

WHEREAS, Sheryl Rollins was an active and devout member of Greater Warner Tabernacle A.M.E. Zion Church, which she served faithfully for many years in various capacities; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Rollins was also deeply devoted to her family, and she always endeavored to remain true to family values of the highest order; and

WHEREAS, she was preceded in death by her parents; her husband of forty-three years, Avon Rollins, Sr.; her brother, Kenneth Wayne Wright; her aunt, Julia Luvenia Yette Rhineheart; and her granddaughter, Erica Nicole Rollins; and

WHEREAS, her memory will live on through the ones who knew and loved her, including her children, Avon Rollins, Jr., and Avondria Rollins; grandchildren, Avon William Rollins III, Nkosi Jevon Rollins, Giavonni Rollins-Andrews, Amariana Rollins-Steele, Glen Davis, and DaQuan Davis; great-grandchildren, Micayah Rollins, Micah Rollins, Micaiah Rollins, Jaceyion Rollins, Jayde Rollins, Jacqueline Rollins, Avon William Rollins IV, Jevon King Rollins, Alani Rollins, Lael Davis, and Kamani Casey; and a host of relatives and friends; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Rollins leaves behind an indelible legacy of integrity and probity in public life, compassion and loyalty in private life, and diligence and dedication in all her chosen endeavors; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the members of this General Assembly should 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 ELEVENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, that we honor the memory of Sheryl Clark Rollins, reflecting fondly upon her impeccable character and her 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 Ms. Rollins.

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