

1 State of Arkansas  
2 94th General Assembly  
3 Regular Session, 2023

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By: Senators R. Murdock, J. Boyd, J. Bryant, Caldwell, L. Chesterfield, A. Clark, Crowell, B. Davis,  
Dees, J. Dismang, J. Dotson, J. English, Flippo, S. Flowers, Gilmore, K. Hammer, Hester, Hickey, Hill,  
Irvin, B. Johnson, M. Johnson, B. King, G. Leding, F. Love, M. McKee, J. Payton, C. Penzo, J. Petty,  
Rice, Stone, G. Stubblefield, D. Sullivan, C. Tucker, D. Wallace

## SENATE MEMORIAL RESOLUTION

11 TO REMEMBER SENATOR ROY C. "BILL" LEWELLEN, JR. AND  
12 TO RECOGNIZE HIS DEDICATED SERVICE AND INVALUABLE  
13 CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE STATE OF ARKANSAS AND TO HIS  
14 LOCAL COMMUNITY.

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### Subtitle

18 TO REMEMBER SENATOR ROY C. "BILL"  
19 LEWELLEN, JR. AND TO RECOGNIZE HIS  
20 DEDICATED SERVICE AND INVALUABLE  
21 CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE STATE OF ARKANSAS  
22 AND TO HIS LOCAL COMMUNITY.

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24 WHEREAS, former Arkansas State Senator Roy C. "Bill" Lewellen, Jr. of  
25 Marianna passed away on Tuesday, March 21, 2023, at the age of 71; and

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27 WHEREAS, born on November 18, 1951, Bill Lewellen was the son of Roy C.  
28 Lewellen Sr. and Ethel Brewer, the nephew of Arkansas State Representative  
29 John Lewellen and State Representative Wilhelmina Lewellen, and the cousin of  
30 former United States Transportation Secretary Rodney Slater; and

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32 WHEREAS, Bill Lewellen received his bachelor's degree from the  
33 University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff and his Juris Doctor from the University  
34 of Arkansas at Little Rock, William H. Bowen School of Law; and

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36 WHEREAS, Bill Lewellen was first elected to the Arkansas Senate in 1990



1 and was the second Black person to serve in the Arkansas Senate in the 20th  
2 century; and

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4 WHEREAS, prior to his election to the Arkansas Senate, Bill Lewellen  
5 served on the Marianna City Council; and

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7 WHEREAS, Senator Lewellen represented eastern Arkansas from 1991  
8 through 2000, served on the Senate Insurance and Commerce Committee and the  
9 Senate Judiciary Committee, was Senate co-chair of the Joint Legislative  
10 Facilities Committee, vice chair of the Senate Rules Committee, and a member  
11 of the Joint Budget Committee and the Joint Performance Review Committee; and

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13 WHEREAS, during his tenure with the Arkansas Senate, Senator Lewellen  
14 sponsored historic legislation that included legislation that created the  
15 Arkansas Minority Health Commission and the Arkansas Civil Rights Act of  
16 1993; and

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18 WHEREAS, in 1992, Senator Lewellen served as an attorney for the Lake  
19 View School District in its fight for an equitable and efficient public  
20 school system and after years of litigation, the state Supreme Court ruled in  
21 favor of the Lake View School District, citing the state's constitutional  
22 duty to provide all Arkansas children with an adequate and equitable  
23 education, regardless of the prosperity or poverty of the region in which  
24 they lived; and

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26 WHEREAS, after leaving the Arkansas Senate, Bill Lewellen continued to  
27 advocate for small, rural school districts facing consolidation and  
28 inequitable treatment as one (1) of only two (2) Black lawyers in Lee County;  
29 and

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31 WHEREAS, Bill Lewellen fought to represent his clients and to help  
32 remedy injustices wherever he could and his dedication led him to receive  
33 numerous local, state, and national recognitions throughout his lifetime; and

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35 WHEREAS, Senator Lewellen was preceded in death by his wife of forty-  
36 three (43) years, Doris Ann Brantley Lewellen; and

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WHEREAS, while Senator Lewellen was committed to improving the lives of all Arkansans, he was well-known as being a devoted father and mentor to his children Adrienne Lewellen, Roy Lewellen, III, Michael Lewellen, Marcus Lewellen, Marco Lewellen, and Marshall Lewellen, as well as a loving grandfather to his six (6) grandchildren,

NOW THEREFORE,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE NINETY-FOURTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:

THAT the Senate remember Senator Bill Lewellen and recognize his commitment to hard work, enormous contributions, and service to the State of Arkansas and his local community.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT upon adoption, a copy of this resolution be provided to the family of Roy C. "Bill" Lewellen, Jr. by the Secretary of the Senate.