

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 12

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

THIRTY-FIRST LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

BY REPRESENTATIVE SPOHNHOLZ

Introduced: 1/21/20

Referred:

A RESOLUTION

1 **Dedicating Capitol Room 106 in the Alaska State Capitol to the late Senator Bettye J.**
2 **Davis.**

3 **BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:**

4 **WHEREAS** Senator Bettye J. Davis served as a member of the House of
5 Representatives from the Seventeenth through the Nineteenth Alaska State Legislatures and as
6 a member of the Senate from the Twenty-Second through the Twenty-Seventh Alaska State
7 Legislatures; and

8 **WHEREAS**, during Representative Davis' time as a member of the House of
9 Representatives, she served as both majority and minority whip and as a member of the House
10 Health, Education, and Social Services Committee, serving as vice-chair of the committee
11 during the Seventeenth Alaska State Legislature; and

12 **WHEREAS**, during Senator Davis' time as a member of the Senate, she served as a
13 member of the Senate Health, Education, and Social Services Committee during the Twenty-
14 Second and Twenty-Third Alaska State Legislatures, chair of the Senate Health, Education,
15 and Social Services Committee during the Twenty-Fifth Alaska State Legislature, and chair of
16 the Senate Health and Social Services Committee and vice-chair of the Senate Education

1 Committee during the Twenty-Sixth and Twenty-Seventh Alaska State Legislatures; and

2 **WHEREAS** Senator Davis' legislative accomplishments include passage of Acts that
3 addressed suicide prevention, foster care, raising the minimum wage, mental health care, good
4 governance, and authorizing youth courts throughout the state, and she sponsored a great deal
5 of legislation aimed at improving the state and the lives of people in the state; and

6 **WHEREAS** Senator Davis began her long political career when she was elected to the
7 Anchorage School Board where she served from 1982 to 1990, including two terms as board
8 president; Senator Davis was appointed to the state Board of Education by Governor Tony
9 Knowles in 1998 and served through 2000, including serving as chair from 1998 through
10 1999; Senator Davis returned to the Anchorage School Board as a member in 2013 and served
11 until 2018; and

12 **WHEREAS** Senator Davis attended Grambling State University where she received
13 her Bachelors of Social Work degree in 1971; and

14 **WHEREAS** Senator Davis arrived in Anchorage, Alaska, in 1972 as a military spouse
15 and continued her higher education at the University of Alaska, Anchorage; and

16 **WHEREAS** Senator Davis began her career in family services working at the Alaska
17 Psychiatric Institute from 1972 to 1975 as a nurse and social worker; and

18 **WHEREAS**, from 1975 to 1989, Senator Davis worked in various positions within
19 the Department of Health and Social Services as a childcare specialist, social worker, and
20 foster care coordinator; and

21 **WHEREAS** Senator Davis received countless awards and honors, including the title
22 of 2010 Pioneer Woman of the Year from the North to the Future, Business and Professional
23 Women, the 2010 Celebrate Liberty Award from the Alaska Civil Liberties Union, induction
24 into the Alaska Women's Hall of Fame by the Alaska Women's Network in 2010, the Martin
25 Luther King Jr. Foundation of Alaska Humanitarian Award, the Mayor's Award for Public
26 Service, the Anchorage Convention and Visitors Bureau Meeting Champion Award, the
27 YWCA Woman of Achievement Award, the Alaska Black Caucus President's Award,
28 selection for the 2000 Notable American Women, selection for the Who's Who of American
29 Women, and the Central Council Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska Award; and

30 **WHEREAS** Senator Davis was an active member of Shiloh Missionary Baptist
31 Church and was affiliated with various organizations, including Delta Sigma Theta Sorority,

1 the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, the Business and
2 Professional Women's Foundation, Alaska Women's Political Caucus, the Athena Society,
3 Special Olympics, Zonta Anchorage, Campfire, Alaska Center for Children and Families, and
4 March of Dimes; and

5 **WHEREAS** Senator Davis helped develop the next generation of state leaders,
6 including many African American leaders, through mentorship and an eye for those with a
7 dedication to public service; and

8 **WHEREAS** Senator Davis was a passionate public servant through the peaceful end
9 of her life; and

10 **WHEREAS** Senator Davis was known as the "Conscience of the Legislature,"
11 passing legislation that continues to influence education, social issues, and economic
12 development;

13 **BE IT RESOLVED** by the Alaska State Legislature that the House Health and Social
14 Services Committee Room and House Education Committee Room, currently Room 106 of
15 the Capitol, be dedicated to Senator Bettye J. Davis for her exemplary service as a member of
16 the House of Representatives and the Senate; and be it

17 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that a bronze plaque shall be placed on or near the door of
18 the room celebrating Senator Bettye J. Davis' legislative achievements, dedication, and
19 service to the state and the legislature, bearing the following inscription:

20 **THE BETTYE J. DAVIS COMMITTEE ROOM**

21 The Bettye J. Davis Committee Room memorializes the service
22 and compassion of Bettye J. Davis, who served as a member of
23 the House of Representatives from the Seventeenth through the
24 Nineteenth Alaska State Legislatures and as a member of the
25 Senate from the Twenty-Second through the Twenty-Seventh
26 Alaska State Legislatures. She was the first African American
27 woman elected to the Alaska State House of Representatives
28 and the first African American elected to the Alaska State
29 Senate. She served as a member of the House Health,
30 Education, and Social Services Committee during the
31 Seventeenth and Eighteenth Alaska State Legislatures,

1 including a term as vice-chair, and as chair of the Senate Health
2 and Social Services Committee and vice-chair of the Senate
3 Education Committee during the Twenty-Sixth and Twenty-
4 Seventh Alaska State Legislatures. Her commitment to children
5 and those living hard lives earned her recognition as the
6 "Conscience of the Legislature." Her tireless advocacy for all
7 Alaskans serves as an example for future generations of
8 legislators.

9 A **COPY** of this resolution shall be presented to the family of the late Senator Bettye
10 J. Davis.