

House Resolution 1479

By: Representatives Frazier of the 126th, Williams of the 168th, Jackson of the 128th, Mitchell of the 88th, Bennett of the 94th, and others

A RESOLUTION

1 Honoring the life and memory of former Keysville Mayor Emma R. Gresham; and for other
2 purposes.

3 WHEREAS, the State of Georgia mourns the loss of one of its most distinguished citizens
4 with the passing of Mayor Emma R. Gresham on March 2, 2018; and

5 WHEREAS, Mayor Gresham was born in 1925 in Reidsville, Georgia, the beloved daughter
6 of Reverend Marvin B. Rhodes, an African Methodist Episcopal pastor and teacher, and Ida
7 Rhodes, a church missionary and Sunday school teacher; and

8 WHEREAS, a graduate of Boggs Academy, Mayor Gresham devoted 32 years to challenging
9 and inspiring the future leaders of this state as an educator in Augusta, teaching second grade
10 and mentally challenged students; and

11 WHEREAS, she was united in love and marriage to her husband, the late Quinten G.
12 Gresham, and was blessed with five remarkable children, Rev. Dr. Quinten, Rev. Ida
13 LaVerne, Rev. Lola Scott, Harold Sr., and Dr. Kay; 14 wonderful grandchildren; ten fabulous
14 great-grandchildren; and two amazing great-great-grandchildren; and

15 WHEREAS, in the early 1980s, she became involved with Keysville Concerned Citizens, a
16 group seeking better living conditions for the community, and through her work with this
17 organization, Mayor Gresham learned that Keysville had been registered as a town and
18 incorporated, yet had not had official leadership in 55 years; and

19 WHEREAS, determined to improve the lives of her neighbors through public service, Mayor
20 Gresham was elected mayor in 1985, but due to a loophole in the town's charter which
21 prevented an official election, Mayor Gresham served as mayor for only five hours; and

22 WHEREAS, after several years of community outreach, legal battles, and two Supreme
23 Court cases, Keysville held an election for mayor in 1988, and Mayor Gresham was again
24 recognized by the people as the most fitting person to lead; and

25 WHEREAS, under Mayor Gresham's watchful eye, the City of Keysville established a water
26 system, a wastewater treatment plant, city streetlights, and a health facility and earned the
27 title of a Certified Literate Community; and

28 WHEREAS, she was a person of magnanimous strengths with an unimpeachable reputation
29 for integrity, intelligence, fairness, and kindness, and by the example she made of her life,
30 she made this world a better place in which to live; and

31 WHEREAS, a compassionate and generous woman, Mayor Emma R. Gresham will long be
32 remembered for her love of family, friendship, and leadership in Keysville and will be
33 missed by all who had the great fortune of knowing her.

34 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES that
35 the members of this body join in honoring the life and memory of Mayor Emma R. Gresham
36 and express their deepest and most sincere regret at her passing.

37

38 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Clerk of the House of Representatives is authorized
39 and directed to make appropriate copies of this resolution available for distribution to the
40 family of Emma R. Gresham, the public, and the press.