

## House Resolution 1817

By: Representatives Beasley-Teague of the 65<sup>th</sup> and Thomas of the 56<sup>th</sup>

## A RESOLUTION

- 1 Honoring the life and memory of Dr. Rita Jackson Samuels; and for other purposes.
- 2 WHEREAS, the State of Georgia mourns the loss of one of its most distinguished citizens  
3 with the passing of Dr. Rita Jackson Samuels on March 27, 2018; and
- 4 WHEREAS, Dr. Rita Jackson Samuels grew up in poverty in Forsyth, Georgia, and would  
5 go on to blaze a trail through history, overcoming barriers to serve in the White House with  
6 President Jimmy Carter; and
- 7 WHEREAS, Dr. Samuels began to advocate for civil and women's rights in her youth when  
8 she worked for the Southern Christian Leadership Conference Operation Breadbasket under  
9 the administration of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.; and
- 10 WHEREAS, inspired by the civil rights movement, Dr. Rita Jackson Samuels emerged as  
11 one of Georgia's most prolific women's right advocates, founding the Georgia Coalition of  
12 Black Women, Inc., in 1980, a women's advocacy training and development organization,  
13 and the Women in Government Internship Project in 1999 to assist young women interested  
14 in government careers; and
- 15 WHEREAS, Dr. Samuels established Women Flying High, LLC, a highly successful,  
16 female-owned consulting and public engagement enterprise in Atlanta, and the firm has been  
17 instrumental in forming strategic alliances and joint venture opportunities that increase  
18 women's share of government contracts; and
- 19 WHEREAS, she was consistently selected by *The Informer* as one of the 50 Most Influential  
20 Women in Georgia; she was selected by the Atlanta Business League as one of the 100 Most  
21 Influential Black Women in Atlanta; and she was named as the 2000 Business Woman of the  
22 Year by the National Association of Negro Business and Professional Women's Clubs; and

23 WHEREAS, in 1971, Governor Jimmy Carter appointed her to be coordinator of the  
24 Governor's Council on Human Relations, making her the first African American woman in  
25 Georgia's history to serve on the executive staff of a Georgia governor; and she would go on  
26 to receive numerous appointments from Georgia governors, including appointment to the  
27 Georgia State Election Board by Governor Joe Frank Harris and reappointments to the King  
28 Commission by Governors Zell Miller and Roy Barnes; and

29 WHEREAS, Dr. Samuels served as a consultant to the Carter White House and to the  
30 Community Services Administration, and before her passing, she was serving on the Martin  
31 Luther King, Jr., Child Development Center and the Joseph E. Lowery Institute for Justice  
32 and Civil Rights; and

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

36 WHEREAS, a compassionate and generous woman, Dr. Rita Jackson Samuels will long be  
37 remembered for her love of humanity and will be missed by all who had the great fortune of  
38 knowing her.

39 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES that  
40 the members of this body join in honoring the life and memory of Dr. Rita Jackson Samuels  
41 and express their deepest and most sincere regret at her passing.

42 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Clerk of the House of Representatives is authorized  
43 and directed to make an appropriate copy of this resolution available for distribution to the  
44 family of Dr. Rita Jackson Samuels.