

House Resolution 991

By: Representative Ealum of the 153rd

A RESOLUTION

1 Recognizing and commending Mr. Larry Thomas on the grand occasion of his retirement;
2 and for other purposes.

3 WHEREAS, for 35 years, Mr. Larry Thomas has served the citizens of Dougherty County,
4 the county government, and the City of Albany; and

5 WHEREAS, Mr. Thomas was born in Columbus, Georgia, to Henry and Pauline Thomas and
6 adhered to the teachings of his parents, who instilled in him the motto that "tough times don't
7 last, but tough people do"; and

8 WHEREAS, Mr. Thomas carried his parental encouragement and his innate leadership
9 abilities with him as he matriculated through Albany State University, where he self-funded
10 most of his education with various entrepreneurial ventures on campus, including his famous
11 residence hall "store"; and

12 WHEREAS, upon graduating from Albany State University, he chose to make Albany his
13 home; and

14 WHEREAS, armed with a degree in business administration, he was employed by Dougherty
15 County in 1980, bringing great energy and innovative ideas to the department as a Tax
16 Appraiser-1; and

17 WHEREAS, he took advantage of all Tax Appraiser education and seminars offered by the
18 Georgia Department of Revenue and other In-Service Tax Appraisal Service training so as
19 to be prepared for any assignment in the appraisal department; and

20 WHEREAS, for 35 years, Mr. Thomas has faithfully served the Board of Assessors with
21 integrity, excellence, dedication, and respect; and

22 WHEREAS, he started as an Appraiser-1, and through his tax knowledge, his ability, and his
23 people skills, he earned the position of Chief Tax Appraiser in 2009, incidentally becoming
24 the first African American to serve as Chief Tax Appraiser in the history of Dougherty
25 County, Georgia; and

26 WHEREAS, in this role, he supervised the assessment of all real and personal property for
27 the development of the \$5.5 billion county digest; and

28 WHEREAS, his major achievements include developing the strategic procedures for
29 facilitating the implementation of State House Bills 233 and 346, assisting county attorneys
30 in the negotiation and settlement of multiple superior court cases, facilitating the
31 implementation of the new Win Gap appraisal system, and creating and establishing several
32 departmental policies that led to the increased productivity of the county appraisal staff; and

33 WHEREAS, Mr. Thomas's commitment to excellence is evidenced by the continuous
34 improvement of Dougherty County's Department of Audit and Accounts Sales Ratios, which
35 were at 37.44% when he entered the position yet went on to meet or surpass the desired state
36 levels of 40% in 2013 and 2014, which were 40.57% and 40.00%, respectively; and

37 WHEREAS, he has led several successful county projects in addition to his regular
38 responsibilities, including the Rural Land, Urban Land, and Towers re-evaluations and the
39 Exemption Review project; and

40 WHEREAS, Mr. Thomas has exemplified his effective leadership knowledge and
41 experience, serving as a professional mentor for his staff and providing opportunities for
42 them to grow and expand their knowledge base and experience to better the performance of
43 their duties for the citizens of Dougherty County; and

44 WHEREAS, in addition to being a professional contributor to the progress and success of the
45 Dougherty County Tax Department, he is a member of both the International and Georgia
46 Associations of Assessing Officials; and

47 WHEREAS, he participates in various community organizations, such as being the President
48 of the Twenty Six Club, an active member of Mt. Zion Baptist Church, and a part of the King
49 Solomon Lodge #14 (Masonic Lodge); and

50 WHEREAS, during his free time, Mr. Thomas enjoys going to the gym, playing basketball,
51 traveling, and spending time with his children, Larry Thomas II, April M. Thomas-Robinson,
52 and Lynnrick Rogers, and other family and friends; and

53 WHEREAS, the Albany City Commission recognized Larry by resolution for his heroic act
54 when he entered a burning building, rendered immediate aid, and saved the lives of seven
55 people who were asleep when they were engulfed by smoke emanating from a burning log
56 that had rolled out of the fireplace in their home; and

57 WHEREAS, it is appropriate that this body recognize, thank, and honor Mr. Larry Thomas
58 for his contributions to the State of Georgia through his efforts as Chief Tax Appraiser for
59 Dougherty County, Georgia.

60 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES that
61 the members of this body recognize and commend Mr. Larry Thomas for his efficient,
62 effective, unselfish, and dedicated public service and congratulate him upon the grand
63 occasion of his retirement.

64 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Clerk of the House of Representatives is authorized
65 and directed to make appropriate copies of this resolution available for distribution to Mr.
66 Larry Thomas and the Chairman of the Dougherty County Board of Commissioners.