



Introduced Version

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**HOUSE  
RESOLUTION No. \_\_\_\_\_**

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*Introduced by: Pryor*

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1           A HOUSE RESOLUTION honoring William Bruce.

2           *Whereas, William "Willie" Bruce was born on December 25,*  
3           *1925, in Cairo, Illinois. He was the first-born child of William*  
4           *and Louise Bruce. William passed away on February 10, 2022,*  
5           *at the age of 96. He was preceded in death by his parents and*  
6           *his sister, Bernice;*

7           *Whereas, William attended the all-black Sumner High*  
8           *School, where he was an excellent student who also excelled in*  
9           *basketball and football as captain of the teams. He also was*  
10          *president of the Glee Club;*

11          *Whereas, He graduated with honors and attended Lincoln*  
12          *College until a family tragedy occurred with the death of his*  
13          *father, who was killed by several white men for crossing in*  
14          *front of their carriage. William left college to join the United*

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1 *States Navy to support his mother and sister;*

2 *Whereas, He served in World War II from 1941 to 1946 on*  
3 *the U.S.S. Columbia (CL56) special task force and received an*  
4 *honorable discharge. He was awarded the Medal of Honors*  
5 *American Theater, Victory Medal, Asiatic-Pacific Theater 3*  
6 *Stars, Philippine Liberation 3 Stars, European-African-Middle*  
7 *East Theater, and a host of other awards;*

8 *Whereas, After the war, he returned home to Cairo, Illinois,*  
9 *to finish his college studies at Lincoln College. Due to his*  
10 *recognized dedication and continuous hard work, William was*  
11 *invited to relocate to Indianapolis, Indiana, by a former Navy*  
12 *officer, which led to him becoming employed at Naval Air*  
13 *Warfare Center for more than 10 years;*

14 *Whereas, William Bruce took his mastered skills and*  
15 *knowledge with him as he later became employed by the United*  
16 *States Department of State at Stout Field, where he held the*  
17 *position of Chief Warehouse Supervisor;*

18 *Whereas, William received several honors, which included*  
19 *two Sagamore of the Wabash awards from Governor Otis R.*  
20 *Bowen and Governor Evan Bayh for his service to the state of*  
21 *Indiana;*

22 *Whereas, William Bruce worked diligently and tirelessly and*  
23 *is recognized as the first African American Chief Purchaser for*  
24 *the State of Indiana after 35 years of service;*

25 *Whereas, William took a second job at the five-star*  
26 *restaurant Chantéclair where he worked for 30 years part time*  
27 *as Head Maitre d'. He received a letter of commendation from*  
28 *Hilton owner Conrad Hilton, Jr., which allowed him to stay at*  
29 *any Hilton properties throughout the United States;*

30 *Whereas, William was an active member of the National*  
31 *Association for Black Veterans, Inc., the American Legion, and*  
32 *the Veterans of Foreign Wars. He was a lifelong Democrat and*  
33 *was very proud to have lived to see an African American*  
34 *President of the United States, whom he stood in line to vote*  
35 *for;*



1       *Whereas, On September 9, 2017, William Bruce, while*  
2       *accompanied by his son-in-law, a retired Master Sergeant from*  
3       *the United States Army, was privileged to take one more*  
4       *"military" journey on the Indy Honor Flight to Washington,*  
5       *D.C.;*

6       *Whereas, William Bruce loved his family and family holiday*  
7       *gatherings, especially on his birthday, Christmas Day. He*  
8       *enjoyed eating good food, especially dessert, playing cards,*  
9       *reading, and discussing sports, the stock market, and business*  
10       *investments. He was an avid Indianapolis Colts fan; and*

11       *Whereas, William was the proud father of his only daughter,*  
12       *Annmarie Byers, (whose husband is Gregory Byers), a proud*  
13       *grandfather of three grandchildren, Marie, (whose husband is*  
14       *Timothy Wright), Gabriella, and Gregory-David, and a proud*  
15       *great-grandfather of three great-grandchildren, Taylor,*  
16       *Morgan, and Zion: Therefore,*

17               *Be it resolved by the House of Representatives of the*  
18               *General Assembly of the State of Indiana:*

19       SECTION 1. That the Indiana General Assembly honors the  
20       life, service, and memory of World War II veteran William  
21       Bruce.

22       SECTION 2. That the Principal Clerk of the House of  
23       Representatives shall transmit copies of this resolution to State  
24       Representative Cherrish Pryor for distribution.

