

HOUSE RESOLUTION 220

By Cooper B

A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of Vera Redwing-Lewis.

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly were greatly saddened to learn of the death of Vera Redwing-Lewis; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Redwing-Lewis was an exemplary public servant and consummate professional who worked assiduously to improve the quality of life for her fellow citizens in numerous capacities; and

WHEREAS, born in Clarksdale, Mississippi, to Bernice Gillard and the late Joseph Gillard, Vera Redwing-Lewis was a proud graduate of Booker T. Washington High School; and

WHEREAS, following in the footsteps of the courageous Memphis State Eight, who were the first African-American students to attend the University of Memphis, Mrs. Redwing-Lewis completed her degree at the university's School of Nursing; and

WHEREAS, a dedicated registered nurse for many years, Vera Redwing-Lewis always exhibited the strongest commitment to patient rights and a belief in just and equitable treatment for all; and

WHEREAS, a lifelong community activist, she participated in several marches that demanded equal pay and benefits for sanitation workers and drew the attention of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., who subsequently marched on behalf of sanitation workers in Memphis; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Redwing-Lewis also organized voter registration drives and was a major force behind The People's Convention that helped elect the city's first black mayor; and

WHEREAS, in addition to these significant contributions to civil rights, Vera Redwing-Lewis was a member of The Neighborhood Christian Center for many years, organized neighborhood clean-ups, conducted toy drives for local children, and headed the Looney St. Block Association; and

WHEREAS, a devout Christian all her life, she began her religious journey at St. Patrick Catholic Church, worshipped for forty years at Holy Names Catholic Church, and finally returned to her home parish, before finding peace in the loving embrace of her Creator; and

WHEREAS, a faithful and loving wife, Vera Redwing-Lewis was preceded in death by her husband, Thomas Lewis; and

WHEREAS, her memory will be forever cherished by her nine children, her friends, church, and the community, which she worked tirelessly to repair and improve for the sake of equality; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Redwing-Lewis leaves behind an indelible legacy of integrity and probity in public life, compassion and loyalty in private life, and diligence and dedication in all her chosen endeavors; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that this General Assembly should pause to remember the bountiful life of this exceptional public servant and human being; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED SEVENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, that we honor the memory of Vera Redwing-Lewis, reflecting fondly upon her impeccable character and stalwart commitment to living the examined life with courage and conviction.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we express our sympathy and offer our condolences to the family of Mrs. Redwing-Lewis.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.