

House Resolution 1234

By: Representatives Reese of the 140th, Smith of the 138th, Hugley of the 141st, and Buckner of the 137th

A RESOLUTION

- 1 Honoring the life and memory of Mary Frances Hill-Watson; 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 Mary Frances Hill-Watson on February 15, 2024; and
- 4 WHEREAS, Mary Frances Hill-Watson was born on January 16, 1935, in Columbus,
5 Georgia, a beloved daughter of Otis V. and Lillian H. Hill; and
- 6 WHEREAS, she graduated from William H. Spencer High School in 1950 and pursued
7 higher education at Albany State University, earning a degree in business management; and
- 8 WHEREAS, she made significant contributions to her community as an office manager with
9 the Columbus Housing Authority and later as a majority owner and funeral director at
10 People's Funeral Service of Columbus Inc., continuing her father's legacy alongside her
11 brother, Vaughn, with whom she founded Hill Watson Memorial Chapel LLC in 2003; and
- 12 WHEREAS, her professional achievements were recognized with numerous awards,
13 including the 1976 Mortician of the Year award from the Georgia Funeral Service

14 Practitioner Association Inc. Third District and the Mary McLeod Bethune Outstanding
15 Woman of the Year Award in 1981; and

16 WHEREAS, a woman of deep and abiding faith, she was an active member of the Greater
17 Beallwood Baptist Church, where she served on the Deacon's Wives Ministry as well as the
18 Pastor's Aide Committee; and

19 WHEREAS, she was united in love and marriage to her husband, Payton Watson, and was
20 blessed with five remarkable children, Cedric Hill, Lillian L. Watson, Sheren Y. Watson, M.
21 Denise Floyd, and M. Diane Walthour, as well as three wonderful grandchildren, Ashley V.
22 Hill, Cedric Hill II, and Amelia M. Walthour; and

23 WHEREAS, Mary Frances Hill-Watson gave inspiration to many through her high ideals,
24 morals, and deep concern for her fellow citizens, and the devotion, patience, and
25 understanding she demonstrated to her family and friends were admired by others; and

26 WHEREAS, a compassionate and generous woman, Mary Frances Hill-Watson will long be
27 remembered for her love of family, friendship, and community and will be missed by all who
28 had the great fortune of knowing her.

29 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES that
30 the members of this body join in honoring the life and memory of Mary Frances Hill-Watson
31 and express their deepest and most sincere regret at her passing.

32 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Clerk of the House of Representatives is authorized
33 and directed to make an appropriate copy of this resolution available for distribution to the
34 family of Mary Frances Hill-Watson.