



Introduced Version

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

DIGEST OF INTRODUCED RESOLUTION

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION memorializing former  
Representative William Crawford.

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**Pryor, Bartlett, Brown C, Harris D,  
Porter, Shackelford, Smith V,  
Summers**

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\_\_\_\_\_, read first time and referred to Committee on

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HC 1058/DI 84



## HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

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A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION memorializing former Representative William Crawford.

*Whereas, Representative William Crawford is remembered as a champion for social justice and equality;*

*Whereas, During his career, Representative William Crawford fought for legislation that helped working men and women, children, and the elderly;*

*Whereas, Often described as a "giant among men", Representative William Crawford died on September 25, 2015, at the age of 79;*

*Whereas, Representative William Crawford represented the 98th District in the House of Representatives from 1972 through 2012, 40 years of building a legacy that made him the most influential African-American elected official in Indiana's history and the longest serving state lawmaker in the United States;*

*Whereas, Born in Indianapolis on January 28, 1936, in Lockefield Gardens in Indianapolis, he served in the United States Navy followed by employment at the Post Office;*

*Whereas, Representative William Crawford never set out to become a politician, but his life changed in 1968;*

*Whereas, Representative Crawford was present on April 4, 1968, and heard Senator Robert Kennedy's words*



*announcing the death of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.;*

*Whereas, Hearing the words of Senator Robert Kennedy that fateful night helped shape his career as a community activist and public servant;*

*Whereas, For Representative Crawford, Senator Kennedy's words were a call to "translate his religion into action", and he worked for the next 47 years to do that;*

*Whereas, In 1972, then State Representative Julia Carson persuaded William Crawford to run for the state legislature;*

*Whereas, As a representative, William Crawford was active in organizing the Indiana Black Legislative Caucus (IBLC) and the National Black Caucus of State Legislators, which honored him as Legislator of the Year in 1995;*

*Whereas, Representative Crawford was also named the Outstanding Freshman Democrat (1973, Indiana Broadcasters Association) and Legislator of the Year (1996, National Black Chamber of Commerce);*

*Whereas, Representative Crawford was instrumental in creating the Indiana Black Expo and served as a longtime board member and officer of the organization;*

*Whereas, In his first term in office, Representative Crawford was appointed to the powerful Ways and Means Committee where he fought for greater opportunities for women and minority-owned businesses, civil rights and equality, and affordable housing;*

*Whereas, In 2002, Representative Crawford served as chairman of the Ways and Means Committee, the first African-American lawmaker to hold this position, and worked to ensure that state spending was just and that the underserved were not overlooked;*

*Whereas, Representative Crawford worked closely with legendary Indianapolis minister and activist Reverend Andrew Brown in his efforts to fight for equality for blacks in Indianapolis;*



*Whereas, Representative Crawford also worked outside of the legislature to improve and empower the local community, working with organizations such as the Concerned Clergy, Indiana Black Expo, the Circle City Classic, and the NAACP;*

*Whereas, Representative Crawford served as a delegate to the first, second, and third National Black Political Conventions (1972, 1974, and 1976), the National Conference on the Black Agenda (1980), the National Black Leadership Summit (1982), and the Democratic National Conventions in 1984, 1988 (supporting Jesse Jackson), and 2008 (Barack Obama);*

*Whereas, An ardent supporter of public education, Representative Crawford was instrumental in the passage of the 21st Century Scholarship Program and fought for school integration, improving the quality of education, funding for public schools, and for cultural and racial diversity in Indianapolis schools;*

*Whereas, Representative Crawford knew the importance of teachers and passed legislation creating the Minority Teachers Scholarship Program, and worked for nearly 25 years as manager of Community Relations and Outreach Programs at Ivy Tech Community College;*

*Whereas, Representative Crawford's deep devotion to diversity and to opening the educational doors to nontraditional students helped Ivy Tech have the largest enrollment of African-Americans and other minorities of any public university or college in Indiana;*

*Whereas, Throughout his career, Representative Crawford remained devoted to the people on the streets and represented this community all the way to the United States Supreme Court;*

*Whereas, Representative Crawford was the lead plaintiff in the lawsuit against Indiana's Voter ID Law, saying it was a thinly veiled attempt to disenfranchise poor, minority, and Democratic voters;*



*Whereas, While the Supreme Court ruled against Representative Crawford, the issues raised against Voter ID laws have been used by subsequent courts to limit or curb the use of Voter ID laws in other states; and*

*Whereas, Representative William Crawford will long be remembered as a champion for the poor and disadvantaged and as one who not only led but taught those he served: Therefore,*

*Be it resolved by the House of Representatives of the General Assembly of the State of Indiana, the Senate concurring:*

- 1       SECTION 1. That the Indiana General Assembly remembers
- 2       Representative William Crawford for his many accomplishments and
- 3       his great love for the people he served.
- 4       SECTION 2. That the Principal Clerk of the House of
- 5       Representatives transmit a copy of this resolution to the family of
- 6       Representative William Crawford.

