

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 88

By Love

A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of Dr. Harold Willoughby Jordan.

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly were greatly saddened to learn of the passing of Dr. Harold Willoughby Jordan; and

WHEREAS, a preeminent physician and the first Black commissioner of the Tennessee Department of Mental Health, Dr. Harold W. Jordan was an exemplary public servant and consummate professional who worked assiduously to improve the quality of life for his fellow citizens in numerous capacities; and

WHEREAS, born in Newman, Georgia, on May 24, 1937, Dr. Harold W. Jordan was the son of Edward P. and Dorothy W. Jordan; he decided at a young age to follow in the footsteps of his grandfather, Dr. John Henry Jordan, who was the first Black physician in Coweta County, Georgia; and

WHEREAS, in 1954, Dr. Jordan graduated as class president and valedictorian of Warner High School and enrolled at Morehouse College, where he was a member of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, sang in the Morehouse Glee Club, and majored in biology with a minor in chemistry; and

WHEREAS, after completing his studies at Morehouse College, he entered Meharry Medical College in Nashville in 1958, following in the steps of both his grandfather and his great-grandfather, Dr. Edward Ramsey, who was the first Black physician in Houston, Texas; and

WHEREAS, in 1959, Dr. Jordan met his future wife, Geraldine Crawford, under extraordinary circumstances; he had gone to Fisk University's gymnasium to see Dr. Martin

Luther King, Jr., speak when a bomb threat occurred and the building was evacuated. Dr. Jordan and Ms. Crawford met during the evacuation; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Harold Jordan and Geraldine Crawford were joined in holy matrimony on June 17, 1962, a week after his graduation from Meharry Medical College, and to their joyous union were born four children, Harold II, Vincent Andre, Karen Dorothy Nicole, and Kristi Yvette; and

WHEREAS, after completing his residency in internal medicine at Meharry Medical College, Dr. Jordan accepted a residency in psychiatry at Vanderbilt University Medical Center, becoming the first Black physician and resident in the history of the university; and

WHEREAS, upon completing his residency, he returned to Meharry Medical College, where he was named an assistant professor and director of the Psychiatric Outpatient Clinic; he served in several capacities at Meharry Medical College before taking a brief leave to serve as assistant commissioner for the Tennessee Department of Mental Health for four years under Governor Winfield Dunn; and

WHEREAS, in 1975, Dr. Harold Jordan became Tennessee's first Black commissioner of the Department of Mental Health, and a State building, the Harold W. Jordan Habilitation Center, was named in his honor; during his tenure as Commissioner of Mental Health, he delivered the commencement address at Meharry Medical College and accomplished the rare feat of the accreditation of every mental health facility in the State; and

WHEREAS, he later served as a longtime chair of the Department of Psychiatry and as acting dean of the Medical School at Meharry; in 2019, Vanderbilt honored him by establishing the annual Harold Jordan Lecture Series and Award Honoring Diversity, Inclusion, and Social Justice, recognizing his time as the first African-American resident at Vanderbilt University Medical Center, where he maintained a clinical appointment until 2016; and

WHEREAS, no stranger to awards and accolades, Dr. Jordan received the Living Legends Award from the Thomas J. Blocker Society in collaboration with the Morehouse College Alumni Association; and

WHEREAS, his past civic and social membership included the American Psychiatric Association, Distinguished Life Fellow; American Association of University Professors; R.F. Boyd Medical Society; National Medical Association; Black Psychiatrists of America; Alpha Omega Alpha Honor Medical Society; Nashville Mental Health Association; Board of Directors, McKendree Manor Methodist Home for the Aged; Board of Directors, University School of Nashville; Board of Directors, Martin Methodist College; Board of Trustees, 100 Black Men of Middle Tennessee; Chi Boule of Sigma Pi Phi; Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity; NAACP Life Member; and Board Member, Grace M. Eaton Day Home, to name just a few; and

WHEREAS, a man of deep and abiding faith, he was a longtime member of Clark Memorial United Methodist Church, where he served as a Sunday school teacher as well as chair of the Pastor Parish Relations Committee for many years; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Jordan enjoyed the love and support of his devoted wife of sixty-two years, Geraldine C. Jordan; his sons, Harold W. (Michelle) Jordan II and Vincent A. Jordan; his daughters, Karen Jordan and Kristi Y. Jordan; his brother, Emerson (Nicole) Jordan; his grandchildren, Rachel L. (Leighton) Batiste, Kathryn A. Jordan, Christopher H. Jordan, and Dontera (Angel) Scaggs; his great-grandchildren, Carter Scaggs and Jordan Ahmad Batiste; special children, Sondra (Carlo) Dade, Alice (Maurico) Croom, Ruth (Jeff) Gates, and Robert (Monica) Anderson, Jr.; special daughter, Dorothy (Deedie) Davis; and godson, Christopher Davis; and

WHEREAS, he will be sadly mourned but fondly remembered by his cousins, Lucille Harris, Bernice Small, Reverend McAllister Hollins, Jocelyn (Joseph) Fowler, Veta Jonas,

Edward D. Jonas, Justine (Joseph) Harris, and Detra Robinson and a host of extended family and dear friends; and

WHEREAS, he was preceded in death by his parents; his sister, Vertelle; and his brother, Edward Jordan II; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Harold W. Jordan leaves behind an indelible legacy of integrity and probity in public life, compassion and loyalty in private life, and diligence and dedication in all his chosen endeavors; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the members of 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 FOURTEENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we honor the memory of Dr. Harold Willoughby Jordan, reflecting fondly upon his impeccable character and his 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 Dr. Jordan.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy and upon proper request made to the appropriate clerk, the language appearing immediately following the State seal appear without House or Senate designation.