

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2003

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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 606
Committee Substitute Favorable 4/16/03

Sponsors:

Referred to:

March 24, 2003

1 A JOINT RESOLUTION HONORING THE LIFE AND MEMORY OF CLARENCE
2 LIGHTNER, PROMINENT CIVIC LEADER, POLITICIAN, AND
3 BUSINESSMAN.

4 Whereas, Clarence Everett Lightner was born on August 15, 1921, in
5 Raleigh, North Carolina, to Calvin Lightner and Mammie Blackmon Lightner; and

6 Whereas, Clarence Lightner was educated in the Raleigh public schools and
7 graduated from North Carolina Central University, where he was an outstanding athlete,
8 especially in football, and Echols College of Mortuary Science; and

9 Whereas, Clarence Lightner was a licensed mortician and funeral director and
10 successfully operated Lightner Funeral Home and Hillcrest Cemetery for many years;
11 and

12 Whereas, Clarence Lightner represented southeast Raleigh on the Raleigh
13 City Council from 1967 to 1973; and

14 Whereas, on November 6, 1973, Clarence Lightner made history when he
15 was elected Mayor of Raleigh, making him the first African-American Mayor of a
16 southern capital city and the first popularly elected Raleigh mayor since 1947; and

17 Whereas, on August 9, 1977, Clarence Lightner was appointed to the North
18 Carolina State Senate by Governor James B. Hunt, Jr.; and

19 Whereas, Clarence Lightner was active in numerous local, State, and national
20 organizations, serving as a charter member of the Southern Conference of Black
21 Mayors, the parent organization of the National Conference of Black Mayors; President
22 of the National Funeral Directors and Morticians Association; Chair of the National Life
23 Membership Foundation of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc., and as a member of the
24 Democratic National Committee and National Business League; and

25 Whereas, Clarence Lightner served as Chair of the Southeast Raleigh
26 Improvement Commission from 1993 to 2001, and in that capacity played a significant
27 role in completing the economic development study which serves as the current
28 guideline for developing southeast Raleigh, implementing the Small Business Success
29 Program, and creating the small business incubation program, which led to building,
30 opening, and operation of the Raleigh Business and Technology Center; and

1 Whereas, Clarence Lightner was a steadfast advocate for higher education,
2 serving as Chair of the Board of Trustees of Saint Augustine's College and as a member
3 of the Board of Trustees of North Carolina State University for 10 years; and

4 Whereas, Clarence Lightner was awarded honorary doctoral degrees from
5 Shaw University, Saint Augustine's College, and North Carolina Central University; and

6 Whereas, Clarence Lightner honorably served his country as a member of the
7 United States Army during World War II; and

8 Whereas, Clarence Lightner was active in the Davie Street Presbyterian
9 Church, where he served as an elder; and

10 Whereas, Clarence Lightner's devotion to improving the lives of others
11 earned him the respect and admiration of all who knew and worked with him; and

12 Whereas, Clarence Lightner's influence in his community and his keen ability
13 to negotiate made him a favorite among politicians and civic leaders, who often sought
14 his advice and counsel; and

15 Whereas, Clarence Lightner expressed many times his belief that no matter
16 what goals we set, what is essential is not the things we do separately, but what we hold
17 in common and what we get done together; and

18 Whereas, Clarence Lightner was a mentor to many African-American leaders,
19 who through the years greatly benefited from his wise guidance; and

20 Whereas, Clarence Lightner died on July 8, 2001; and

21 Whereas, Clarence Lightner was a loving husband to Marguerite Massey
22 Lightner and devoted father to Claire Lightner Sharpe, Debra Lightner Yancey, Bruce
23 Lightner, and the late Lawrence Lightner; Now, therefore,
24 Be it resolved by the House of Representatives, the Senate concurring:

25 **SECTION 1.** The General Assembly honors the memory of Clarence Everett
26 Lightner and expresses the appreciation of this State for his life, accomplishments, and
27 service.

28 **SECTION 2.** The General Assembly extends its deepest sympathy to the
29 family of Clarence Everett Lightner for the loss of their beloved family member.

30 **SECTION 3.** The Secretary of State shall transmit a certified copy of this
31 resolution to the family of Clarence Everett Lightner.

32 **SECTION 4.** This resolution is effective upon ratification.