



Metropolitan Nashville and Davidson County, TN

Legislation Text

File #: RS2021-928, **Version:** 1

A resolution honoring the life of Senator Thelma Harper.

WHEREAS, Senator Thelma Harper passed away on April 22, 2021, at the age of 80; and

WHEREAS, Thelma Harper was elected to the Tennessee State Senate in 1991, making her the first African-American woman to be elected to the State Senate; and

WHEREAS, following her election, Senator Harper served her constituents with passion and distinction, and was repeatedly re-elected to maintain her seat for 28 years -- making her the longest serving female State Senator in Tennessee history; and

WHEREAS, Senator Harper, a Brentwood, Tennessee native, graduated with a bachelor's degree from Tennessee State University in 1978 prior to being elected as the District 2 representative to the Metropolitan Council in 1983, a position she held until 1991; and

WHEREAS, among her major accomplishments while serving as a Council representative was the closing of the Bordeaux Landfill where she led a number of protests and blockades of dump trucks, during which she and fellow community activists were arrested; and

WHEREAS, during her career in the Tennessee General Assembly, Senator Harper was instrumental in passing legislation to aid Tennessee's most vulnerable citizens -- particularly women, children, and the elderly; and

WHEREAS, after nearly 40 years of public service, including 28 years as a beloved State Senator and 8 years as a Metro Council member, Senator Harper retired from politics in 2019; and

WHEREAS, throughout her career, Senator Harper earned the respect and admiration from colleagues on both sides of the political aisle, and was famous for her fabulous collection of hats; and

WHEREAS, Senator Harper was a proud and dedicated member of the Nashville Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated; and she and her husband were owners of several businesses, including Paul's Market, Harper's Restaurant, and a BP gas station; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting and proper that the Metropolitan Council recognizes and honors the life of Senator

Thelma Harper, who did so much to make Nashville and the State of Tennessee better places to live and work.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE METROPOLITAN GOVERNMENT OF NASHVILLE AND DAVIDSON COUNTY:

Section 1. That the Metropolitan Council hereby goes on record as honoring the legacy of devoted public service embodied by Senator Thelma Harper.

Section 2. That the Metropolitan Council Office is directed to prepare a copy of this Resolution to be presented to Senator Harper's family by the Minority Caucus, Councilmember-at-Large Sharon Hurt, Chair, and Councilmember Delishia Porterfield, Vice Chair.

Section 3. That this Resolution shall take effect from and after its adoption, the welfare of The Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County requiring it.