

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 47

In Memory
of
Mildred Jefferson

WHEREAS, Dr. Mildred Fay Jefferson, a trailblazing physician, educator, and activist, passed away on October 15, 2010, at the age of 84, leaving behind a remarkable legacy of achievement; and

WHEREAS, The only child of Millard and Guthrie Jefferson, Mildred Fay Jefferson was born in Pittsburg and grew up in Carthage, where her father served as a Methodist minister; she attended public schools in East Texas and later graduated summa cum laude from Texas College in Tyler, before enrolling at Tufts University in Medford, Massachusetts, and earning her master's degree; setting her sights on the medical field, she etched her name in history as the first African American woman to graduate from Harvard Medical School in 1951; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Jefferson remained a groundbreaking figure in her medical career, becoming the first woman employed as a general surgeon at Boston Medical Center; she served as a professor at Boston University's School of Medicine, and she had a career-long interest in the relationship between medicine, ethics, and law, as well as their wider social and public policy implications; she further made a name for herself as the first woman ever admitted into the Boston Surgical Society; and

WHEREAS, In the 1970s, Dr. Jefferson aligned herself with the right-to-life movement; after serving on the board of governors of the Value of Life Committee, she formed the Massachusetts Citizens for Life in 1972, and her organization eventually incorporated as a state affiliate of the National Right to Life Committee; in 1978, she became the founding president of the Right to Life Crusade, Inc.; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Jefferson's steadfast dedication to the cause led her to campaign for candidates at the local, state, and national levels who shared her views, and she appeared in television advertisements for pro-life presidential candidate Ellen McCormack in 1976; over the years, Dr. Jefferson served on the boards of more than 30 different groups opposing abortion, euthanasia, human cloning, and embryonic stem cell research, and she was affiliated with both Black Americans for Life and Feminists for Life; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Mildred Jefferson distinguished herself as an eloquent and fearless voice for the pro-life movement, and through her unshakeable resolve to make a difference, she set an inspiring example that continues to endure to this day; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the Senate of the State of Texas, 89th Legislature, 2nd Called Session, hereby pay tribute to the life and legacy of Dr. Mildred Fay Jefferson; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That when the Texas Senate adjourns this day, it do so in memory of Dr. Jefferson.

Hughes

President of the Senate

I hereby certify that the above Resolution was adopted by the Senate on September 4, 2025, by a rising vote.

Secretary of the Senate

Member, Texas Senate