

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, The Honorable Zinetta Arceneaux Burney of Houston
2 passed away on September 22, 2024, at the age of 83, leaving her
3 loved ones to reflect on her remarkable life and achievements; and

4 WHEREAS, A Houston native, the former Zinetta Arceneaux was
5 born on February 24, 1941, to John and Thelma Arceneaux; although
6 she left high school to raise her daughter, Sharon Maria Burney, she
7 later earned her GED and completed training to begin her career as a
8 licensed vocational nurse; in 1968, she received a bachelor's
9 degree in mathematics from Texas Southern University, and she went
10 on to graduate from TSU's Thurgood Marshall School of Law on her way
11 to becoming an attorney; and

12 WHEREAS, Alongside four other women, Ms. Burney founded the
13 first African American female-led law practice in the country,
14 known as the "Sisters in Law," which served the Acres Homes
15 community; she took on cases even when her clients were unable to
16 pay, and her generosity extended to helping others in the
17 neighborhood with groceries and other necessities; she later became
18 the senior partner of the law firm of Burney & Foreman, and in 2004,
19 she was elected presiding judge of Harris County Justice of the
20 Peace Court, Precinct 7, Place 2; she served in that capacity for a
21 decade and a half until she had the satisfaction of seeing her
22 daughter succeed her in her long-held position in 2019; and

23 WHEREAS, Active in her professional community, Judge Burney
24 belonged to the Houston Lawyers Association, the Gulf Coast Black

1 Women Lawyers Association, the State Bar of Texas, and the Houston
2 and National Bar Associations, among others; in addition, she was
3 appointed by Governor Ann Richards to the University of Houston
4 System Board of Regents; she benefited her fellow residents through
5 her work as a board member for the Third Ward Redevelopment Council
6 and the Greater Houston Women's Foundation, as chair of the board of
7 commissions for the Houston Housing Authority, and as a member of
8 such local organizations as the Houston Area Urban League;
9 throughout her life, she was recognized for her accomplishments by
10 the City of Houston, the NAACP, the United Negro College Fund, the
11 Thurgood Marshall School of Law, and numerous other groups; and

12 WHEREAS, Zinetta Burney was a pioneering legal professional
13 and a true pillar of her community, and although she will be greatly
14 missed, she leaves behind a legacy that will long be treasured by
15 all who held her dear; now, therefore, be it

16 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 89th Texas
17 Legislature hereby pay tribute to the life of the Honorable Zinetta
18 Arceneaux Burney and extend deepest sympathy to her family and
19 friends; and, be it further

20 RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be
21 prepared for her family and that when the Texas House of
22 Representatives adjourns this day, it do so in memory of Zinetta
23 Burney.

Jones of Harris

H.R. No. 275

Speaker of the House

I certify that H.R. No. 275 was unanimously adopted by a rising vote of the House on June 1, 2025.

Chief Clerk of the House