

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 106

In Memory
of
Dionne Phillips Bagsby

WHEREAS, Tarrant County lost a trailblazing public servant with the death of former county commissioner Dionne Phillips Bagsby on January 10, 2019, at the age of 82; and

WHEREAS, The daughter of Paul William Phillips and Ann Wicks Phillips, the former Dionne Phillips was born in Phoenix, Illinois; she graduated from Illinois Wesleyan University and went on to earn speech pathology certification from George Peabody College for Teachers and a master's degree from Texas Christian University; following her marriage to James A. Bagsby, she became the mother of two treasured children, Dionne and James, and with the passing years, her life was further enriched by her four grandchildren, Kirbe, Kelli, Josiah, and Elijah, and five step-grandchildren; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Bagsby joined the Fort Worth Independent School District as a speech pathologist in the late 1960s, and she played a key role in the peaceful integration of the district; engaged in the broader community, she impressed other activists with her tremendous skill and dedication, and they urged her to run for office; she won election in 1988 as the county's first female and first African American commissioner and became the only African American woman to serve in that office across the entire state; during her 16 years in that post, she strove tirelessly to make government more inclusive, guiding the appointment of women and minorities to county boards and commissions and improving diversity in the workforce; she was a tireless advocate for the most vulnerable members of society, especially women and children, and through her leadership, the county increased resources for education and women's shelters; moreover, it decentralized hospital services to expand access to health care, and it implemented a countywide immunization program; and

WHEREAS, After leaving government, Ms. Bagsby remained very active in the community; she served on numerous boards over the years, sharing her expertise with such organizations as the Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra, the United Way of Tarrant County, Jubilee Theater, and Baylor Scott and White All Saints Medical Center; in addition, she was a regent of Stephen F. Austin State University and Texas College; her myriad accolades included the 2018 High Impact Legacy Award from the Fort Worth Chamber of Commerce, and both the county and the City of Crowley named public buildings in her honor; Ms. Bagsby, however, never sought credit for her accomplishments, and she advised the many people she mentored to focus on results rather than acclaim; a popular source of wise counsel, she could be relied upon to offer the unvarnished truth, as well as kind encouragement; and

WHEREAS, Dionne Phillips Bagsby set an inspiring example of selfless devotion to the greater good, and although she will be deeply missed, her contributions will continue to resonate powerfully in the years to come; now, therefore, be it

S.R. No. 106

RESOLVED, That the Senate of the State of Texas, 86th Legislature, hereby pay tribute to the life of Dionne Phillips Bagsby and extend sincere condolences to all who mourn her passing; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That an official copy of this Resolution be prepared for her family and that when the Texas Senate adjourns this day, it do so in memory of Dionne Phillips Bagsby.

Powell, Birdwell,
Hancock, Nelson

President of the Senate

I hereby certify that the above Resolution was adopted by the Senate on February 1, 2019, by a rising vote.

Secretary of the Senate

Member, Texas Senate

Member, Texas Senate

Member, Texas Senate

Member, Texas Senate