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By:  Cole H.R. No. 22

R E S O L U T I O N

WHEREAS, A life made rich through meaningful service drew to a close with the passing of Berl Lawrence Handcox Sr. of Austin on June 21, 2020, at the age of 88; and

WHEREAS, Born in Denton on February 23, 1932, to R. D. and Annie Vernell Handcox, Berl Handcox grew up with a brother, James; after graduating from Fred Moore High School in 1949, he served in the U.S. Navy during the Korean War; he subsequently attended Prairie View A&M College, where he earned a bachelor's degree in 1961; while there, he met his future wife, the former Ruby L. Hemphill; the couple went on to share 50 rewarding years of marriage until her passing, and their cherished family grew to include three sons, Gary, Ricky, and Berl, as well as seven grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Handcox began his career as an educator and coach at high schools in Sealy and College Station; he then worked at the Gary Job Corps Center in San Marcos before moving to Austin in 1964 and finding employment as an in-house education training facilitator and a company recruiter with IBM; along the way, he distinguished himself as not only a civic leader but as a trailblazer in his community, becoming the first African American elected to the Austin City Council since it adopted the manager-council form of government; he ably represented his constituents for two terms, from 1971 to 1975, focusing his efforts on improving the quality of life in East Austin by revitalizing infrastructure and addressing many other needs; and

WHEREAS, After his tenure on the council, Mr. Handcox was appointed executive director of the Office of Equal Employment Opportunity under Governor Dolph Briscoe; he then worked for Motorola and the Texas Workforce Commission and became an entrepreneur prior to his retirement; he also volunteered on various boards throughout his life; and

WHEREAS, Berl Handcox gave freely of his time and expertise to better his community, and he leaves behind a legacy that will resonate for years to come; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 87th Texas Legislature hereby pay tribute to the life of Berl Lawrence Handcox Sr. and extend deepest sympathy to his loved ones; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be prepared for his family and that when the Texas House of Representatives adjourns this day, it do so in memory of Berl Handcox.