87R7104 CJM-D

By:  Turner of Dallas H.R. No. 404

R E S O L U T I O N

WHEREAS, Family and friends are experiencing great sadness with the passing of community leader Curtis James Smith of Dallas, who died on July 30, 2020, at the age of 95; and

WHEREAS, Born to Roy and Arbella Smith on January 18, 1925, Curtis Smith grew up in Longview with three siblings, Roy, Nina, and Ola; a U.S. Navy Veteran of World War II, Mr. Smith was the first African American promoted to seaman first class; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Smith wed Kelcy Mae Williams in 1947, and the couple shared an extraordinary and loving marriage that spanned 73 years, a love story that signifies a lifetime of dedication and commitment to one another and to their family; they were blessed with two daughters, Curtis Marie and Melbra, and their family later grew to include four grandchildren, Kristia, Christopher, Gerald, and Curtis, and 10 great-grandchildren; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Smith enjoyed a 32-year career as a Sky Chief manager with Braniff Airways; he went on to work as a Sky Chief manager at American Airlines for 11 years before retiring; and

WHEREAS, Mr. and Mrs. Smith were some of the earliest residents of the Hamilton Park community; Mr. Smith founded the Hamilton Park Interorganizational Council and played a pivotal role in desegregation; he was instrumental in establishing policies and educational rights for African Americans within the Richardson Independent School District and Hamilton Park Pacesetter Magnet School, and he was appointed by a federal judge as the first chair and organizer of the Richardson ISD Bi-Racial Committee following the *Brown v. Board of Education* supreme court case; he was also a precinct chair and a founding member of the Hamilton Park Civic League; he was honored at the Hamilton Park High School 2010 reunion, and he and his wife were named as a Dallas County Power Couple; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Smith was a leading member of Hamilton Park United Methodist Church, where he served as chair of the state-licensed child care center and as a member of the Board of Trustees Finance Committee and the United Methodist Men of The Park ministry; in recognition of his leadership, the church's library was named in his honor; and

WHEREAS, Deeply devoted to his family and his community, Curtis Smith made a meaningful difference in the lives of countless fellow citizens, and his contributions and impact will be remembered with admiration for years to come; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 87th Texas Legislature hereby pay tribute to the memory of Curtis James Smith and extend sincere condolences to the members of his family, his friends, and his many supporters; 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 Curtis Smith.