

By: Cole

H.R. No. 22

R E S O L U T I O N

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

4 WHEREAS, Born in Denton on February 23, 1932, to R. D. and
5 Annie Vernell Handcox, Berl Handcox grew up with a brother, James;
6 after graduating from Fred Moore High School in 1949, he served in
7 the U.S. Navy during the Korean War; he subsequently attended
8 Prairie View A&M College, where he earned a bachelor's degree in
9 1961; while there, he met his future wife, the former Ruby L.
10 Hemphill; the couple went on to share 50 rewarding years of marriage
11 until her passing, and their cherished family grew to include three
12 sons, Gary, Ricky, and Berl, as well as seven grandchildren and
13 eight great-grandchildren; and

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

1 infrastructure and addressing many other needs; and

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

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

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

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