

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2023

H.J.R. 652
Apr 17, 2023
HOUSE PRINCIPAL CLERK

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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION DRHJR40270-LG-27

Sponsors: Representative A. Baker.

Referred
to:

1 A JOINT RESOLUTION HONORING THE LIFE AND MEMORY OF ANNIE BROWN
2 KENNEDY, FORMER MEMBER OF THE NORTH CAROLINA HOUSE OF
3 REPRESENTATIVES.

4 Whereas, Annie Brown was born in Atlanta, Georgia, on October 13, 1924, the oldest
5 of four children of Reverend Mancy Brown and Mary Louise Sheats Brown; and

6 Whereas, Annie Brown Kennedy received a B.S. degree in economics from Spelman
7 College in 1945 and a J.D. degree from Howard University School of Law in 1951; and

8 Whereas, in 1953, Annie Brown moved with her husband, Harold Kennedy, Jr., and
9 twin sons to Winston-Salem. In 1955, she joined her husband to establish one of the first
10 husband-wife law firms in the State. She focused her practice on criminal and civil litigation,
11 employment, civil rights, and family law. Later, two of her sons joined the firm; and

12 Whereas, in 1976, Annie Brown Kennedy became the first African American woman
13 chosen to serve as a presidential elector from North Carolina and, in 1979, the first African
14 American woman to serve in the North Carolina General Assembly when she was appointed by
15 Governor James B. Hunt, Jr., to fill a vacant seat; and

16 Whereas, Annie Brown Kennedy served in the House of Representatives from 1983
17 through 1994, during which time she made significant contributions as a member of numerous
18 committees, including Constitutional Amendments; Employment Security; Finance; Legislative
19 and Local Redistricting; Rules and Operation of the House; University Board of Governors; and
20 Water and Air Resources. She served as chair of the Committee on Courts and Justice;
21 Governmental Ethics; Judiciary I; and Manufacturers and Labor; and as vice-chair of the
22 Committee on Judiciary II; Local Government No. II; Natural and Economic Resources; and
23 University Board of Governors Nominating Committee; and

24 Whereas, Annie Brown Kennedy actively participated in many organizations,
25 including the Board of Visitors of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill,
26 Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Bicentennial Commission, Board of Directors of the North
27 Carolina Institute of Minority Economic Development, Winston-Salem Symphony Board of
28 Directors, Altrusa Club of Winston-Salem, League of Women Voters, United Way of Forsyth
29 County, and the County Morehead Scholarship Selection Committee; and

30 Whereas, Annie Brown Kennedy served as the local Director of Southern National
31 Bank; Director of the Winston-Salem State University Foundation, Inc., Winston-Salem Housing
32 Foundation, Legal Aid Society of Forsyth County, and Forsyth County Tuberculosis Association;
33 and as a member of the Advisory Board for the American Federal Savings & Loan Association
34 of Greensboro and North Carolina Criminal Code Commission; and

35 Whereas, Annie Brown Kennedy was a member of numerous professional
36 organizations, including the American Bar Association, National Bar Association, North



1 Carolina Academy of Trial Lawyers, North Carolina Association of Black Lawyers, Forsyth
2 County Bar Association, Association of Women Attorneys, and Forsyth County Bar Association,
3 of which she served as president; and

4 Whereas, Annie Brown Kennedy was awarded numerous honors for her achievements
5 and contributions, including the Margaret Brent Women Lawyers of Achievement Award in
6 2002, the American Bar Association's highest award given to a female lawyer in the United
7 States; the Justice Award from the North Carolina Bar Association in 1992 for outstanding
8 service to the profession and the public; the Founders Spirit Award from Spelman College in
9 1995 for distinguished service in Law and Politics; the Distinguished Alumni Award in Law and
10 Politics from Howard University in 1993; and the Distinguished Leadership Award from North
11 Carolina A&T State University in 1988. She was the first African American attorney to be
12 inducted into the North Carolina Bar Association's General Practice Section Hall of Fame in
13 1996; and

14 Whereas, Annie Brown Kennedy was a faithful member of the First Baptist Church
15 of Winston-Salem, where she served for 18 years on the Board of Trustees; and

16 Whereas, Annie Brown Kennedy was predeceased by her husband, Harold Kennedy,
17 Jr., who served in the House of Representatives during the 1977 Session of the General
18 Assembly; and

19 Whereas, Annie Brown Kennedy died on January 17, 2023, at the age of 98, leaving
20 to mourn her memory, her sons, Harold Kennedy, III (Claudia), Harvey Kennedy (Pat), and
21 Michael Kennedy; Now, therefore,

22 Be it resolved by the House of Representatives, the Senate concurring:

23 **SECTION 1.** The General Assembly honors the memory of Annie Brown Kennedy,
24 former member of the House of Representatives and groundbreaking attorney, and expresses its
25 appreciation for her outstanding achievements and devoted public service to the City of
26 Winston-Salem, Forsyth County, and the State of North Carolina.

27 **SECTION 2.** The General Assembly extends its deepest sympathy to the family of
28 Annie Brown Kennedy for the loss of a beloved family member.

29 **SECTION 3.** The Secretary of State shall send a copy of this resolution to the family
30 of Annie Brown Kennedy.

31 **SECTION 4.** This resolution is effective upon ratification.