

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2005

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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 578*

Sponsors: Representatives Wray and Hunter (Primary Sponsors).

Referred to: Rules, Calendar, and Operations of the House.

March 10, 2005

1 A JOINT RESOLUTION HONORING THE LIFE AND MEMORY OF REVEREND
2 SHERLEY W. EDWARDS OF POTECASTI, NORTH CAROLINA, A CIVIL
3 RIGHTS ADVOCATE AND ARDENT SUPPORTER OF EDUCATION.

4 Whereas, Sherley W. Edwards was born on March 13, 1913, in Potecasi,
5 North Carolina, the eighth child of Thomas and Laura Jane Edwards; and

6 Whereas, Sherley W. Edwards was educated at the Potecasi Graded School
7 and later the Rich Square Training School before enrolling at the Tuskegee Institute in
8 Tuskegee, Alabama; and

9 Whereas, Sherley W. Edwards married Margaret Peele in 1941, and this
10 union produced four children; and

11 Whereas, Sherley W. Edwards, eager to complete the education he began
12 years earlier, enrolled at Shaw University in 1954 and graduated in 1959 with a degree
13 in sociology and religion; and

14 Whereas, Sherley W. Edwards faithfully served as pastor of the Second
15 Baptist Potecasi Church in Potecasi, North Carolina, and New Haven Baptist Church in
16 Murfreesboro, North Carolina, for 40 years; and

17 Whereas, Sherley W. Edwards also served as pastor of other churches in
18 northeastern North Carolina, including Sandy Branch Church in Roxobel, Jordan Grove
19 Baptist Church in Winton, and Jordan Hill Baptist Church in Macon; and

20 Whereas, Sherley W. Edwards, an early advocate for civil rights for
21 African-Americans, worked tirelessly along with several others, including former House
22 of Representatives member Reverend C.M. Creecy, to end the split school year for
23 African-American children in Northampton County, and later served as President of the
24 Northampton County NAACP; and

25 Whereas, Sherley W. Edwards strongly believed that a quality education was
26 the path to success and made it part of his life's mission to encourage young people in
27 his churches and his community to stay in school and maintain good grades; and

28 Whereas, Sherley W. Edwards founded the Northampton County Ministers
29 Council for Education in 1983 to serve as a community resource for the county's public

1 schools by helping to identify potential dropouts, offering support to students who were
2 failing, and promoting student achievement; and

3 Whereas, Sherley W. Edwards served as a member of many civic and
4 religious organizations, including the Northampton County Parents and Teachers
5 Association, Farmers and Homemakers Association of Northampton County, the
6 Northampton County NAACP, the Northampton County Baptist Association, and the
7 Northampton County Ministers Council; and

8 Whereas, Sherley W. Edwards received many awards and recognitions for his
9 good works and dedication, including the Northampton County NAACP Award in
10 1987; the Migrant Mission Ministry Award in 1995; the Richard Allen Ebony
11 Excellence Award in 1997; the Fayetteville State University Award of Excellence in
12 1998; and the Dr. Martin Luther King Humanitarian Award in 2004; and

13 Whereas, Sherley W. Edwards died on July 21, 2004; and

14 Whereas, Sherley W. Edwards was a devoted husband to his beloved wife,
15 Margaret Peele Edwards, who predeceased him on September 6, 1993; a loving father to
16 his four children, Wendell Edwards, Blanche Edwards, Thomas Edwards, and Elnora
17 Massey; six grandchildren; and four great-grandchildren; Now, therefore,

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

19 **SECTION 1.** The General Assembly honors the life of Reverend Sherley W.
20 Edwards and acknowledges his lifelong service to the citizens of northeastern North
21 Carolina.

22 **SECTION 2.** The General Assembly extends sympathy to the family of
23 Reverend Sherley W. Edwards for the loss of a beloved family member.

24 **SECTION 3.** The Secretary of State shall transmit a copy of this resolution
25 to the family of Reverend Sherley W. Edwards.

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