

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2003
RATIFIED BILL

RESOLUTION 2003-15
HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 844

A JOINT RESOLUTION HONORING THE LIFE AND MEMORY OF ELMER
"E.V." WILKINS, FORMER EDUCATOR AND CIVIC LEADER.

Whereas, Elmer Vanray "E.V." Wilkins was born on July 4, 1911, to Tom and Maggie Wilkins in Roper, North Carolina; and

Whereas, E.V. Wilkins received his B.S. and M.A. degrees from North Carolina Central University; and

Whereas, E.V. Wilkins taught mathematics in Roper at J.J. Clemmons High School, which was renamed Washington County Union School; and

Whereas, while at Clemmons High School, E.V. Wilkins met the love of his life, Elizabeth Witherspoon, also a teacher, whom he later married; and

Whereas, E.V. Wilkins became principal of Clemmons High School in 1941 and served in that position until 1974; and

Whereas, E.V. Wilkins was a mentor to his young students, encouraging them to attain academic success; and

Whereas, in 1946, E.V. Wilkins was instrumental in raising money to purchase the school's first bus; and

Whereas, E.V. Wilkins and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People won a major victory in the mid-1950s when the court sided with them in allowing African-American residents in Washington County the right to vote; and

Whereas, in 1967, E.V. Wilkins became the first African-American since reconstruction to be elected to the Roper Town Council; and

Whereas, in 1975, E.V. Wilkins was the first African-American elected as Mayor of Roper, a position he held for 20 years; and

Whereas, E.V. Wilkins was a member of numerous boards, serving on the State Board of Education, the State Economic Development Commission, the North Carolina Secondary Road Council, the North Carolina Railroad Board of Directors, and the North Carolina State Ports Authority; and

Whereas, E.V. Wilkins served as a member of the Board of Trustees of the North Carolina School of Science and Mathematics, the Advisory Board for the Rural Education Institution at East Carolina University, and of the Elizabeth City State University Board of Trustees from 1987 to 1994, serving as Chair from 1989 to 1994; and

Whereas, E.V. Wilkins organized and served as director of the Industrialization Center in Roper from 1974 to 1975; and

Whereas, E.V. Wilkins was active in the Democratic party, serving as a delegate to the National Democratic Convention in 1972, 1980, and 1984; and

Whereas, E.V. Wilkins received numerous honors and awards, including the North Carolina Distinguished Citizen Award, the Order of the Long Leaf Pine Award, the Service Award by the North Carolina Leadership Caucus, the North Carolina Distinguished Service Award, and the North Carolina Human Relations Commission's Libby D. Koontz Award in recognition of his dedication and leadership in the areas of education, civil rights, and human rights; and

Whereas, E.V. Wilkins was honored by Elizabeth City State University when the University's computer center was renamed the E.V. Wilkins Academic Computing Center in 1992; and

Whereas, E.V. Wilkins was also honored by the University with the establishment of the E.V. Wilkins Endowed Chair in the Elizabeth City State University School of Education and Psychology in 1996; and

Whereas, E.V. Wilkins died on June 2, 2002; and

Whereas, E.V. Wilkins is survived by his daughters, Bunny Sanders and Joy Price, son-in-law, Ralph Price, and two grandchildren; Now, therefore,

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

SECTION 1. The General Assembly honors the life and memory of Elmer "E.V." Wilkins and expresses the gratitude of this State and its citizens for service he rendered.

SECTION 2. The General Assembly extends its deepest sympathy to the family of Elmer "E.V." Wilkins for the loss of a beloved family member.

SECTION 3. The Secretary of State shall transmit a certified copy of this resolution to the family of Elmer "E.V." Wilkins.

SECTION 4. This resolution is effective upon ratification.

In the General Assembly read three times and ratified this the 11th day of June, 2003.

Marc Basnight
President Pro Tempore of the Senate

James B. Black
Speaker of the House of Representatives