

## House Resolution 187

By: Representatives Thomas of the 55<sup>th</sup>, Morgan of the 39<sup>th</sup>, Abdul-Salaam of the 74<sup>th</sup>, Sinkfield of the 60<sup>th</sup>, Buckner of the 76<sup>th</sup>, and others

## A RESOLUTION

- 1 Recognizing and honoring the life of Shirley St. Hill Chisholm; and for other purposes.
- 2 WHEREAS, Shirley St. Hill Chisholm was born on November 30, 1924, in Brooklyn, New  
3 York, to West Indian immigrants Charles and Ruby St. Hill; and
- 4 WHEREAS, graduating from Girls High School in Brooklyn in 1942, she attended Brooklyn  
5 College, where she first earned a reputation as an outspoken and intelligent debater and an  
6 advocate for minority rights; and
- 7 WHEREAS, after graduating with honors, she worked in the day care field while attending  
8 night classes at Columbia University to earn her master's degree in education and  
9 participating actively in local politics, helping form the Bedford-Stuyvesant Political League  
10 and founding the Unity Democratic Club in 1960, which was instrumental in mobilizing  
11 black and Hispanic voters; and
- 12 WHEREAS, she launched her political career in 1964 when she was elected to the New York  
13 General Assembly, and, after completing her term, campaigned to represent New York's  
14 Twelfth Congressional District and became the first African American woman elected to  
15 Congress; and
- 16 WHEREAS, demonstrating her bold determination, she hired an all-female staff during her  
17 first term in Congress and spoke out in support of civil rights, women's rights, and the poor  
18 and against the Vietnam War; and
- 19 WHEREAS, when she was relegated to the Agriculture Committee, she challenged the  
20 assignment, criticizing it as irrelevant to her urban district, and was reassigned to the  
21 Veterans Affairs Committee and eventually to the Education and Labor Committees; and

1 WHEREAS, an untiring advocate for equality, she joined the Congressional Black Caucus  
2 in 1969 as one of its founding members, and in 1970, she co-founded the National  
3 Organization for Women, later commenting that she had always encountered the most  
4 resistance in her political career because of her gender; and

5 WHEREAS, on January 25, 1972, Ms. Chisholm announced her candidacy for President of  
6 the United States, running as a "candidate of the people," and, having received 152 delegate  
7 votes, helped to pave the way for future women and minority candidates; and

8 WHEREAS, she became one of America's foremost female orators, authored two books,  
9 *Unbought and Unbossed* and *The Good Fight*, and, upon her retirement from Congress in  
10 1982, was named to the Purington Chair at Mount Holyoke College and held several other  
11 university teaching positions; and

12 WHEREAS, still politically active, she was a critical asset in the 1980s to Jesse Jackson's  
13 campaigns for the presidency, and she chaired the increasingly powerful National Political  
14 Congress of Black Women and served on the Advisory Council of the National Organization  
15 for Women; and

16 WHEREAS, a devoted champion of women's rights, she was a member of Delta Sigma Theta  
17 Sorority, Inc., and was inducted into the National Women's Hall of Fame in 1993; and

18 WHEREAS, on January 1, 2005, this country lost an exceptional woman and an historical  
19 figure with the passing of Shirley St. Hill Chisholm; and

20 WHEREAS, her legacy as a woman who fought for positive change in the twentieth century  
21 has been celebrated by filmmaker Shola Lynch in her documentary "Chisholm '72: Unbought  
22 and Unbossed," which will air on PBS in February, 2005.

23 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES that  
24 the members of this body join in recognizing and honoring the life of Shirley St. Hill  
25 Chisholm and extend their deepest sympathy to her family and to the State of New York for  
26 the loss of this remarkable woman.

27 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Clerk of the House of Representatives is authorized  
28 and directed to transmit an appropriate copy of this resolution to the family of Shirley St. Hill  
29 Chisholm.