

House Resolution 907

By: Representatives Orrock of the 58th, Gardner of the 57th, Drenner of the 86th, and Benfield of the 85th

A RESOLUTION

- 1 Commending Berl Boykin; and for other purposes.
- 2 WHEREAS, Berl Boykin has been a tireless activist for human rights and justice and
3 equality in Atlanta since entering Emory University in 1961; and
- 4 WHEREAS, he is the only remaining major organizer of the Atlanta Pride event, which
5 numbered only 125 marchers when Boykin personally counted each one at the first Atlanta
6 Pride March in June 1971, and now numbers in the hundreds of thousands; and
- 7 WHEREAS, he and two now-deceased activists, Klaus Smith and Bill Smith, presented the
8 first official petition to a sitting Georgia governor for lesbian and gay equal rights under the
9 law, when they met with Governor Jimmy Carter on July 14, 1971; and
- 10 WHEREAS, he served for many years with Atlanta's internationally acclaimed alternative
11 newspaper, *The Great Speckled Bird*, facilitating coverage of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and
12 transgendered issues at a time when major media outlets denied any coverage; and
- 13 WHEREAS, he has distinguished himself as a professional radio commentator on WRFG
14 radio, WREK radio, and especially Atlanta's National Public Radio affiliate WABE 90.1FM,
15 serving for many years as chief drama critic; producing a series, "Horror House," which aired
16 for two years on National Public Radio affiliates across the country; and serving as panelist
17 on the LGBT Community Forum program; and
- 18 WHEREAS, today he serves as co-coordinator of "Touching Up Our Roots: Atlanta's LGBT
19 History Project Initiative" and, with the Roots collective, was instrumental in influencing
20 former President Jimmy Carter to officially support same sex civil unions on December 24,
21 2004; and

1 WHEREAS, he is quoted as an authoritative source of community record in the *Los Angeles*
2 *Times* and has facilitated the acquisition of the Anti-Klan Neighborhood Network papers to
3 the Special Collections Division of the Emory University Woodruff Library, which serves
4 as archivist for the "Touching Up Our Roots" project.

5 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES that
6 the members of this body commend Berl Boykin for being a positive force for social equality
7 and justice and enhancing the lives of all whom his efforts have touched.

8 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Clerk of the House of Representatives is authorized
9 and directed to transmit an appropriate copy of this resolution to Berl Boykin.