

Senate Resolution 976

By: Senators Powell of the 23rd, Brown of the 26th, Jackson of the 24th, Tate of the 38th, Ramsey, Sr. of the 43rd and others

A RESOLUTION

1 Honoring the life and memory of the Honorable John H. Ruffin, Jr.; and for other purposes.

2 WHEREAS, the State of Georgia has lost one of her most distinguished public servants,
3 innovative legal minds, and civil rights advocates with the passing of the Honorable John H.
4 Ruffin, Jr.; and

5 WHEREAS, a native of Waynesboro, Georgia, Judge Ruffin earned his bachelor's degree
6 from Morehouse College and his law degree from Howard University School of Law and
7 was admitted to the Georgia Bar in 1961;

8 WHEREAS, Judge Ruffin was the first African American Chief Judge of the Court of
9 Appeals of Georgia, the first African American Superior Court Judge for the Augusta
10 Judicial Circuit, and the first African American member of the Augusta Bar Association; and

11 WHEREAS, during the nearly five decades Judge Ruffin practiced law and sat on the bench,
12 he was recognized with numerous awards and honors, including a Trailblazer Award from
13 Georgia Minority Judges, a Logan E. Bleckley Award for Judicial Excellence from the
14 Atlanta Bar Association, a Judicial Council Hall of Fame Award from the National Bar
15 Association, an Outstanding Service Award from the National Alumni Association of
16 Morehouse College, and a Man of the Year Award from the Augusta Branch of the NAACP;
17 and

18 WHEREAS, Judge Ruffin was an honest and dedicated public servant who strove for
19 excellence in all his endeavors and whose primary concern was always the fair and impartial
20 administration of justice; and

21 WHEREAS, his colleagues knew him as a clear thinker and hard worker, as a man whose
22 strong convictions were supported by meticulous research and careful consideration, and as

23 an equitable, impartial leader whose decisions were governed by the rules of honesty and fair
24 play; and

25 WHEREAS, Judge Ruffin's leadership and guidance were instrumental to many civic and
26 professional organizations, including the Board of Trustees of the Institute of Continuing
27 Judicial Education of Georgia, the Georgia Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers, the
28 Boys Club of Augusta, and the Voter Education Project, to name just a few; and

29 WHEREAS, Judge Ruffin leaves behind many who will cherish his memory and legacy,
30 including his loving wife, Judith; his son and daughter-in-law, Brinkley and Candace; and
31 his grandsons, Bryson and Myles; and

32 WHEREAS, an intelligent and compassionate man, Judge Ruffin will long be remembered
33 for his love family and friendship, and this loyal husband, father, grandfather, and jurist will
34 be missed by all who had the great fortune of knowing him; and

35 WHEREAS, the State of Georgia mourns the loss of this trusted and enduring public figure,
36 a principled statesman and strong defender of the law with a sharp legal mind and a passion
37 for justice.

38 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE that the members of this body
39 join to honor the life and achievements of the Honorable John H. Ruffin, Jr., express their
40 deepest regret at his passing, and extend their most sincere condolences to his family.

41 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Secretary of the Senate is authorized and directed
42 to transmit an appropriate copy of this resolution to the family of the Honorable John H.
43 Ruffin, Jr.