

Senate Resolution 432

By: Senators Davis of the 22nd and Stone of the 23rd

A RESOLUTION

1 Celebrating the life of Judge John H. Ruffin, Jr., and dedicating a road in his memory; and
2 for other purposes.

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

6 WHEREAS, Judge John H. Ruffin, Jr., became the 62nd Judge of the Court of Appeals of
7 Georgia when he was administered the oath of office by Governor Zell Miller on August 24,
8 1994, after 33 years of practicing law and serving on the superior court bench; and

9 WHEREAS, Judge Ruffin was born and reared in Waynesboro, Burke County, Georgia, the
10 son of John H. Ruffin, Sr., and Anna Davis Ruffin, and he was a graduate of Waynesboro
11 High and Industrial School, Morehouse College, and Howard University School of Law in
12 Washington, D.C.; and

13 WHEREAS, he was admitted to the Georgia Bar on July 5, 1961; and

14 WHEREAS, he was appointed a Superior Court Judge of the Augusta Judicial Circuit in
15 1986 by Governor Joe Frank Harris and he continued to serve as a superior court judge until
16 his appointment to the Court of Appeals; and

17 WHEREAS, in addition to being the first African American Superior Court Judge for the
18 Augusta Judicial Circuit, Judge Ruffin was also the first African American member of the
19 Augusta Bar Association, and the third African American and first African American Chief
20 Judge to serve on the Court of Appeals of Georgia; and

21 WHEREAS, in addition to his membership in the State Bar of Georgia, Judge Ruffin was a
22 member of the bars of the Supreme Court of Georgia, United States Supreme Court, United

23 States Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit, and United States District Courts for the
24 Southern and Middle Districts of Georgia; and

25 WHEREAS, Judge Ruffin had many professional, civic and religious affiliations, including:
26 Council of Superior Court Judges of Georgia; Council of Juvenile Court Judges of Georgia;
27 Tenth Judicial Administrative District; Chairman, Board of Trustees, Institute of Continuing
28 Judicial Education; Georgia Commission on Gender Bias; Court Reform Committee,
29 Governor's Conference on Justice in Georgia; Georgia Association of Criminal Defense
30 Lawyers; Georgia Advisory Council to the Legal Services Program; Judicial Nominating
31 Commission; Georgia Conference of Black Lawyers, Inc.; State Bar Judicial Compensation
32 Committee; American Judicature Society; National Bar Association; American Bar
33 Association; Augusta Bar Association; and the Atlanta Bar Association; and

34 WHEREAS, he was elected Secretary-Treasurer of the Council of Superior Court Judges and
35 was on track to become the first African American to serve as President of the Council of
36 Superior Court Judges of Georgia prior to his appointment to the Court of Appeals; and

37 WHEREAS, Judge Ruffin and his beautiful wife, Judith, had one son, Brinkley, and two
38 grandsons, Bryson and Myles; and

39 WHEREAS, Judge Ruffin and his family are members of the Tabernacle Baptist Church in
40 Augusta; and

41 WHEREAS, it is only fitting and proper that a lasting memorial to the life and outstanding
42 career of Judge John H. Ruffin, Jr., be established.

43 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF
44 GEORGIA that the members of this body celebrate the life and outstanding career and many
45 accomplishments of Judge John H. Ruffin, Jr., and dedicate the portion of SR 25 beginning
46 at SR 88 to the Burke County line as the Judge John H. Ruffin, Jr. Memorial Highway.

47 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED the Department of Transportation is authorized and directed
48 to erect and maintain appropriate signs dedicating the Judge John H. Ruffin, Jr. Memorial
49 Highway.

50 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Secretary of the Senate is authorized and directed
51 to transmit an appropriate copy of this resolution to the family of Judge John H. Ruffin, Jr.,
52 and the Department of Transportation.