

House Resolution 669

By: Representatives Beasley-Teague of the 65th, Abrams of the 89th, Dawkins-Haigler of the 91st, Stephenson of the 90th, Bell of the 58th, and others

A RESOLUTION

- 1 Recognizing and commending Representative Tyrone L. Brooks, Sr.; and for other purposes.
- 2 WHEREAS, Representative Tyrone L. Brooks, Sr., has long been recognized by the citizens
3 of this state for the vital role that he has played in leadership and his deep personal
4 commitment to the welfare of the citizens of Georgia; and
- 5 WHEREAS, labels such as dynamic public speaker, lifelong civil rights worker, and servant
6 of the people are frequently used to describe this dedicated, hard-working, and energetic
7 legislator, known around the world as the man who changed the Georgia flag; and
- 8 WHEREAS, Representative Brooks was born in Washington, Wilkes County, Georgia, and
9 raised in Warrenton, Georgia, a beloved son of Ruby and Mose Brooks; and
- 10 WHEREAS, he was educated in the public school system, later attending Boggs Academy
11 in Keysville, Georgia; the Lassalle Institute in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; Howard
12 University in Washington, D.C.; Atlanta University; and the Harvard University John F.
13 Kennedy School of Government in Cambridge, Massachusetts; in May of 2001, he was
14 honored with the John Marshall School of Law's first honorary Doctor of Jurisprudence
15 degree; and
- 16 WHEREAS, at the age of 15, Representative Brooks began his career in public service as an
17 activist for civil and human rights as a volunteer with the Southern Christian Leadership
18 Conference (SCLC) and became a full-time staffer of the organization in 1967 under Dr.
19 Martin Luther King, Jr.; and
- 20 WHEREAS, Representative Brooks served in many positions, nationally and locally, under
21 Dr. King, Reverend Ralph David Abernathy, Reverend Hosea Williams, and Dr. Joseph E.
22 Lowery; he has been at the forefront of and involved in the struggle for freedom, justice, and
23 equality since 1960 and has been jailed 66 times for civil rights work; and

24 WHEREAS, Representative Brooks's political successes include his leadership in the
25 movement to reactivate the town of Keysville, Georgia, despite receiving threats against his
26 life; the passage of the 1983 Antiterrorism (Anti-KKK) Law; the establishment of the
27 Positive Employment and Community Help (PEACH) Program in 1986; settlement of "The
28 Brooks Litigation" in 1992; the 1992 Reapportionment Max Black Plan; and his 1999
29 sponsorship of a resolution urging federal and state authorities to reopen investigation of the
30 murders of five African Americans at the Moore's Ford Bridge in Walton County; and

31 WHEREAS, Representative Brooks has diligently and conscientiously devoted innumerable
32 hours of his time, talents, and energy in opposition to Georgia's death penalty law; mandatory
33 minimum sentences; two strikes, three strikes, and out laws; and laws that mandate trials for
34 children in adult courts and now supports proposals calling for a moratorium on executions
35 until a comprehensive study is conducted to evaluate its disproportionate disparity impacting
36 African Americans, minorities, and the poor; and

37 WHEREAS, his House Bill 16, which became law on January 21, 2001, and won an almost
38 20 year battle in the General Assembly to change the Georgia state flag; his sponsorship of
39 House Bills 1027 and 1327, House Resolution 1343, and his sponsorship of 2005 legislation
40 to repeal and purge Jim Crow era segregation laws from the Georgia Constitution and
41 Georgia Code; and his 2006 House Bill 101, which allowed law enforcement officers the
42 opportunity to buy back service prior to 1976 which was denied to them because of race,
43 encapsulate Representative Brooks's dedicated service that has earned him respect and
44 admiration; and

45 WHEREAS, Representative Brooks is an active member of the Georgia Legislative Black
46 Caucus, president of the Georgia Association of Black Elected Officials, and co-founder of
47 the Coalition for the People's Agenda; and

48 WHEREAS, Representative Brooks has received numerous awards and honors for
49 outstanding leadership and service from many civic, religious, government, media,
50 educational, and civil rights organizations, including the NAACP, SCLC,
51 SCLC/W.O.M.E.N., Inc., History Makers, Georgia Coalition of Black Women, Inc., and the
52 National Baptist Convention; in 2007, he was selected as Man of the Year by the *Georgia*
53 *Informer Newspaper*, and in 2008, he was inducted into the International Civil Rights Walk
54 of Fame; and

55 WHEREAS, it is abundantly fitting and proper that the outstanding accomplishments of this
56 remarkable and distinguished Georgia be appropriately recognized.

57 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES that
58 the members of this body commend and recognize Representative Tyrone L. Brooks, Sr., for
59 his efficient, effective, selfless, and dedicated public service to the State of Georgia and
60 extend to him their most sincere best wishes for continued success and happiness.

61 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Clerk of the House of Representatives is authorized
62 and directed to transmit an appropriate copy of this resolution to Representative Tyrone L.
63 Brooks, Sr.