

House Resolution 1553

By: Representatives Herring of the 145th, Jones of the 143rd, and Paris of the 142nd

A RESOLUTION

1 Commending the life, leadership, and enduring contributions of Ms. Pearlie Toliver and her
2 role in advancing civil rights, community development, economic empowerment, and
3 leadership in the Macon-Bibb region; and for other purposes.

4 WHEREAS, Ms. Pearlie Toliver was a distinguished Mercer University alumna who, in
5 1965, enrolled in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and became one of the first Black
6 female students to help integrate the university during a pivotal era in higher education and
7 civil rights; and

8 WHEREAS, Mercer University was among the first private colleges in Georgia to
9 voluntarily desegregate, and Ms. Toliver's courage to attend and persevere in a climate of
10 intense social and racial challenge stands as a testament to her character and commitment to
11 equality; and

12 WHEREAS, prior to attending Mercer University, Ms. Toliver was also among the first
13 African American students to be involved in integrating public schools in Macon-Bibb
14 County, breaking barriers and setting an example for future generations; and

15 WHEREAS, during Mercer’s 2023 Founders’ Day celebration marking the 60th anniversary
16 of the university’s integration, Ms. Toliver returned to deliver an inspirational address
17 reflecting on her experiences, resilience, personal growth, and dedication to academic
18 excellence and community service; and

19 WHEREAS, following her graduation, Ms. Toliver enjoyed a successful and impactful
20 37-year career in retail banking and mortgage lending, including service as vice president for
21 Branch Banking and Trust Co., where she advanced community reinvestment initiatives that
22 helped racially and economically revitalize neighborhoods in Macon; and

23 WHEREAS, Ms. Toliver actively served her community and state through leadership roles
24 on numerous boards and commissions, including chairing the Board of Commissioners of
25 the Macon Housing Authority, participating on the Bibb County Consolidated Government
26 Transition Team, and contributing to the Georgia Tobacco Commission, Georgia Student
27 Finance Commission, and other civic and educational bodies; and

28 WHEREAS, a lifelong proponent of leadership development, Ms. Toliver graduated from
29 Leadership Macon in 1985 and later received the Robert F. Hatcher Distinguished
30 Leadership Award, Women of Achievement Award, and the Liberty Bell Award from the
31 Macon Bar Association in recognition of her exemplary service and influence; and

32 WHEREAS, she was a lifetime member of the Greater Macon Chamber of Commerce and
33 served on local and state boards for the League of Women Voters, actively promoting civic
34 engagement, economic empowerment, and financial security for all citizens.

35 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES that
36 the members of this body commend Ms. Pearlle Toliver for her extraordinary life of service,

37 her role in advancing civil rights and educational access, and her lasting contributions to the
38 economic and social fabric of the Macon-Bibb region.

39 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Clerk of the House of Representatives is authorized
40 and directed to make an appropriate copy of this resolution available for distribution to Ms.
41 Pearlie Toliver.