

## House Resolution 1797

By: Representatives Bell of the 75<sup>th</sup>, Cannon of the 58<sup>th</sup>, Gilliard of the 162<sup>nd</sup>, Williams of the 168<sup>th</sup>, Jackson of the 165<sup>th</sup>, and others

## A RESOLUTION

1 Urging for the renaming of Grady Memorial Hospital to Grady-Bell Memorial Hospital; and  
2 for other purposes.

3 WHEREAS, Grady Memorial Hospital has long stood as one of Georgia's most significant  
4 public healthcare institutions, serving generations of Atlantans and residents across the state;  
5 and

6 WHEREAS, the hospital is named in honor of Henry Grady, a historical figure who, while  
7 influential in shaping the "New South" narrative, was also documented as an outspoken white  
8 supremacist whose public speeches and writings promoted racial hierarchy and opposed  
9 Black political and social equality; and

10 WHEREAS, numerous institutions across the nation have set a precedent by reevaluating  
11 and, where appropriate, removing the names of historical figures whose legacies are rooted  
12 in racism and exclusion in order to better reflect contemporary values of equity, dignity, and  
13 justice; and

14 WHEREAS, Dr. Roy Charles Bell Sr. was one of Atlanta's first Black dentists, a respected  
15 civic leader, and a courageous civil rights activist who played a pivotal role in advancing  
16 healthcare equity; and

17 WHEREAS, Dr. Bell led the legal effort that forced the desegregation of Grady Memorial  
18 Hospital through the landmark 1962 United States Supreme Court ruling in *Bell v.*  
19 *Fulton-DeKalb Hospital Authority*, which held that public hospitals receiving federal funds  
20 could not lawfully operate on a segregated basis; and

21 WHEREAS, this historic victory not only desegregated Grady Memorial Hospital but also  
22 accelerated the dismantling of segregation within public hospital systems throughout the  
23 American South; and

24 WHEREAS, Dr. Bell's leadership challenged the very discriminatory practices that defined  
25 the era in which the hospital operated and ensured that access to care would no longer be  
26 denied on the basis of race; and

27 WHEREAS, the Fulton-DeKalb Hospital Authority was compelled to comply with  
28 constitutional principles of equal protection as a result of Dr. Bell's advocacy and legal  
29 action; and

30 WHEREAS, renaming the institution to Grady-Bell Memorial Hospital would preserve  
31 historical continuity while affirmatively recognizing a local hero whose legacy aligns with  
32 the hospital's mission to provide equitable, compassionate care to all people.

33 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES that  
34 the members of this body urge the appropriate governing authorities to take all necessary

35 steps to rename Grady Memorial Hospital to Grady-Bell Memorial Hospital in honor of Dr.  
36 Roy Charles Bell Sr., whose life and legacy advanced justice, equality, and access to  
37 healthcare for all Georgians.

38 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Clerk of the House of Representatives is authorized  
39 and directed to make appropriate copies of this resolution available for distribution to the  
40 public and the press.