

SENATE RESOLUTION No. 1707

A RESOLUTION recognizing 50 years of black state senators in Kansas and honoring George W. Haley, the first elected black state senator in Kansas.

WHEREAS, February of each year is designated "Black History Month" in the United States, and, in Kansas, Governor Sam Brownback has also designated the same, urging all Kansans to recognize accomplishments and contributions to Kansas made by people of color; and

WHEREAS, The 1965 session of the Kansas State Legislature was the first time in history that blacks would serve in the Kansas Senate, a legislative body that first commenced upon Statehood in 1861; and

WHEREAS, George Williford Boyce Haley was born on August 28, 1925, in Henning, Tennessee. After serving in World War II in the U.S. Air Force, George Haley attended Morehouse College with fellow student Martin Luther King, Jr. and became one of the first African-Americans to graduate from the University of Arkansas School of Law. George Williford Boyce Haley, a Republican Kansas City attorney and resident of Wyandotte County, and Democrat Curtis McClinton, Sr., a realtor from Wichita and member of the Kansas House of Representatives, were both elected to the Kansas Senate in the general election held in November, 1964. Haley was officially accorded first-elected status because his district number, 11, numerically preceded McClinton's district number, 26. Haley's last name alphabetically precedes McClinton's and Wyandotte County election officials reported election results to the Secretary of State's office before Sedgwick County election officials reported results; and

WHEREAS, Haley joined the firm of Stevens, Jackson and Davis in Kansas City, Kansas, who provided legal assistance in the landmark civil rights case, *Brown v. Board of Education* in Topeka, Kansas. Haley then served as Deputy City Attorney in Kansas City, Kansas; and

WHEREAS, In the Kansas Legislature, Senator George Haley was an advocate for personal liberties and social equity, and a visionary for inclusion. He was often not supported by fellow members of the Kansas Senate, including members from his own political party. A noted example of putting principles above partisan or popular politics was his near-solo support for fair and equal housing; and

WHEREAS, Haley went on to serve in six United States presidential administrations. He served as Chief Counsel of the Federal Transportation Administration under President Nixon, Associate Director for the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission at the U.S. Information Agency and General Counsel and Congressional Liaison under President Ford, Senior Advisor to the U.S. delegation of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization under President Reagan, Chairman of the Postal Rate Commission under President George H.W. Bush and, under President Clinton, as the U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of The Gambia in West Africa, from whence Haley's forefather Kuntah Kinteh was brought to America; and

WHEREAS, Haley now lives in Silver Spring, Maryland, with his wife of 60 years, Doris; and

WHEREAS, Over the last 50 years, beginning with George W. Haley, only eight other black people have served in the Kansas State Senate: Curtis R. McClinton; Bill McCray; Eugene Anderson; U.L. "Rip" Gooch; Sherman J. Jones; David B. Haley; Donald Betts Jr.; and Oletha Faust-Goudeau. Edward Sexton Jr. held the honorary title of Kansas State Senator, but did not serve: Now, therefore,

*Be it resolved by the Senate of the State of Kansas:* That we do hereby honor and recognize the half century of elected Afri-Kansans in this Chamber, cognizant during Black History Month of their contributions to the greatness of our state. We especially acknowledge the accomplishments of our first elected black member, George W. Haley, who, through determination, hard work and the grace of God, broke numerous barriers to become a distinguished and inspiring American statesman.

*Be it further resolved:* That the Secretary of the Senate shall send two enrolled copies of this resolution to Ambassador George W. Haley.

Senate Resolution No. 1707 was sponsored by Senator David Haley.

I hereby certify that the above RESOLUTION originated in the SENATE, and was adopted by that body

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*President of the Senate.*

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*Secretary of the Senate.*