

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2003

S

1

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 538

Sponsors: Senator Holloman.

Referred to: Rules and Operations of the Senate.

March 26, 2003

1 A JOINT RESOLUTION HONORING THE LIFE AND MEMORY OF ELMER
2 "E.V." WILKINS, FORMER EDUCATOR AND CIVIC LEADER.

3 Whereas, Elmer Vanray "E.V." Wilkins was born on July 4, 1911, to Tom
4 and Maggie Wilkins in Roper, North Carolina; and

5 Whereas, E.V. Wilkins received his B.S. and M.A. degrees from North
6 Carolina Central University; and

7 Whereas, E.V. Wilkins taught mathematics in Roper at J.J. Clemmons High
8 School, which was renamed Washington County Union School; and

9 Whereas, while at Clemmons High School, E.V. Wilkins met the love of his
10 life, Elizabeth Witherspoon, also a teacher, whom he later married; and

11 Whereas, E.V. Wilkins became principal of Clemmons High School in 1941
12 and served in that position until 1974; and

13 Whereas, E.V. Wilkins was a mentor to his young students, encouraging them
14 to attain academic success; and

15 Whereas, in 1946, E.V. Wilkins was instrumental in raising money to
16 purchase the school's first bus; and

17 Whereas, E.V. Wilkins and the National Association for the Advancement of
18 Colored People won a major victory in the mid-1950s when the court sided with them in
19 allowing African-American residents in Washington County the right to vote; and

20 Whereas, in 1967, E.V. Wilkins become the first African-American since
21 reconstruction to be elected to the Roper Town Council; and

22 Whereas, in 1975, E.V. Wilkins was the first African-American elected as
23 Mayor of Roper, a position he held for 20 years; and

24 Whereas, E.V. Wilkins was a member of numerous boards, serving on the
25 State Board of Education, the State Economic Development Commission, the North
26 Carolina Secondary Road Council, the North Carolina Railroad Board of Directors, and
27 the North Carolina State Ports Authority; and

28 Whereas, E.V. Wilkins served as a member of the Board of Trustees of the
29 North Carolina School of Science and Mathematics, the Advisory Board for the Rural
30 Education Institution at East Carolina University, and of the Elizabeth City State

1 University Board of Trustees from 1987 to 1994, serving as Chair from 1989 to 1994;
2 and

3 Whereas, E.V. Wilkins organized and served as director of the
4 Industrialization Center in Roper from 1974 to 1975; and

5 Whereas, E.V. Wilkins was active in the Democratic party, serving as a
6 delegate to the National Democratic Convention in 1972, 1980, 1982, and 1986; and

7 Whereas, E.V. Wilkins received numerous honors and awards, including the
8 North Carolina Distinguished Citizen Award, the Order of the Long Leaf Pine Award,
9 the Service Award by the North Carolina Leadership Caucus, the North Carolina
10 Distinguished Service Award, and the North Carolina Human Relations Commission's
11 Libby D. Koonz Award in recognition of his dedication and leadership in the areas of
12 education, civil rights, and human rights; and

13 Whereas, E.V. Wilkins was honored by Elizabeth City State University when
14 the University's computer center was renamed the E.V. Wilkins Academic Computing
15 Center in 1992; and

16 Whereas, E.V. Wilkins was also honored by the University with the
17 establishment of the E.V. Wilkins Endowed Chair in the Elizabeth City State University
18 School of Education and Psychology in 1996; and

19 Whereas, E.V. Wilkins died on June 2, 2002; and

20 Whereas, E.V. Wilkins is survived by his daughters, Bunny Sanders and Joy
21 Price, son-in-law, Ralph Price, and two grandchildren; Now, therefore,
22 Be it resolved by the Senate, the House of Representatives concurring:

23 **SECTION 1.** The General Assembly honors the life and memory of Elmer
24 "E.V." Wilkins and expresses the gratitude of this State and its citizens for service he
25 rendered.

26 **SECTION 2.** The General Assembly extends its deepest sympathy to the
27 family of Elmer "E.V." Wilkins for the loss of a beloved family member.

28 **SECTION 3.** The Secretary of State shall transmit a certified copy of this
29 resolution to the family of Elmer "E.V." Wilkins.

30 **SECTION 4.** This resolution is effective upon ratification.