

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA

**SESSION 2003
RATIFIED BILL**

**RESOLUTION 2003-21
HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 606**

A JOINT RESOLUTION HONORING THE LIFE AND MEMORY OF CLARENCE LIGHTNER, PROMINENT CIVIC LEADER, POLITICIAN, AND BUSINESSMAN.

Whereas, Clarence Everett Lightner was born on August 15, 1921, in Raleigh, North Carolina, to Calvin Lightner and Mammie Blackmon Lightner; and

Whereas, Clarence Lightner was educated in the Raleigh public schools and graduated from North Carolina Central University, where he was an outstanding athlete, especially in football, and Echols College of Mortuary Science; and

Whereas, Clarence Lightner was a licensed mortician and funeral director and successfully operated Lightner Funeral Home and Hillcrest Cemetery for many years; and

Whereas, Clarence Lightner represented southeast Raleigh on the Raleigh City Council from 1967 to 1973; and

Whereas, on November 6, 1973, Clarence Lightner made history when he was elected Mayor of Raleigh, making him the first African-American Mayor of a southern capital city and the first popularly elected Raleigh mayor since 1947; and

Whereas, on August 9, 1977, Clarence Lightner was appointed to the North Carolina State Senate by Governor James B. Hunt, Jr.; and

Whereas, Clarence Lightner was active in numerous local, State, and national organizations, serving as a charter member of the Southern Conference of Black Mayors, the parent organization of the National Conference of Black Mayors; President of the National Funeral Directors and Morticians Association; Chair of the National Life Membership Foundation of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc., and as a member of the Democratic National Committee and National Business League; and

Whereas, Clarence Lightner served as Chair of the Southeast Raleigh Improvement Commission from 1993 to 2001, and in that capacity played a significant role in completing the economic development study which serves as the current guideline for developing southeast Raleigh, implementing the Small Business Success Program, and creating the small business incubation program, which led to building, opening, and operation of the Raleigh Business and Technology Center; and

Whereas, Clarence Lightner was a steadfast advocate for higher education, serving as Chair of the Board of Trustees of Saint Augustine's College and as a member of the Board of Trustees of North Carolina State University for 10 years; and

Whereas, Clarence Lightner was awarded honorary doctoral degrees from Shaw University, Saint Augustine's College, and North Carolina Central University; and

Whereas, Clarence Lightner honorably served his country as a member of the United States Army during World War II; and

Whereas, Clarence Lightner was active in the Davie Street Presbyterian Church, where he served as an elder; and

Whereas, Clarence Lightner's devotion to improving the lives of others earned him the respect and admiration of all who knew and worked with him; and

Whereas, Clarence Lightner's influence in his community and his keen ability to negotiate made him a favorite among politicians and civic leaders, who often sought his advice and counsel; and

Whereas, Clarence Lightner expressed many times his belief that no matter what goals we set, what is essential is not the things we do separately, but what we hold in common and what we get done together; and

Whereas, Clarence Lightner was a mentor to many African-American leaders, who through the years greatly benefited from his wise guidance; and

Whereas, Clarence Lightner died on July 8, 2002; and

Whereas, Clarence Lightner was a loving husband to Marguerite Massey Lightner and devoted father to Claire Lightner Sharpe, Debra Lightner Yancey, Bruce Lightner, and the late Lawrence Lightner; Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the House of Representatives, the Senate concurring:

SECTION 1. The General Assembly honors the memory of Clarence Everett Lightner and expresses the appreciation of this State for his life, accomplishments, and service.

SECTION 2. The General Assembly extends its deepest sympathy to the family of Clarence Everett Lightner for the loss of their beloved family member.

SECTION 3. The Secretary of State shall transmit a certified copy of this resolution to the family of Clarence Everett Lightner.

SECTION 4. This resolution is effective upon ratification.

In the General Assembly read three times and ratified this the 19th day of June, 2003.

Beverly E. Perdue
President of the Senate

James B. Black
Speaker of the House of Representatives