

By: Senator L. Chesterfield

## SENATE RESOLUTION

TO RECOGNIZE IRMA HUNTER BROWN FOR HER SERVICE TO THE  
STATE OF ARKANSAS.

### Subtitle

TO RECOGNIZE IRMA HUNTER BROWN FOR HER  
SERVICE TO THE STATE OF ARKANSAS.

WHEREAS, Irma Lee Hunter Brown was born on January 5, 1939, in Tampa, Florida, to Dovie Estoria White Hunter and Joseph Hartwell Hunter; and

WHEREAS, Irma Hunter Brown grew up in Forsyth, Georgia and moved to North Little Rock, Arkansas, to attend Shorter College; and

WHEREAS, Irma Hunter Brown received her associate's degree in 1958, and then transferred to Arkansas Agricultural, Mechanical, & Normal College (now the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff), where she was a member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority and graduated magna cum laude in 1960 with a double major in history and government and a minor in education; and

WHEREAS, Irma Hunter Brown served in the Arkansas House of Representatives from 1981 to 1998 and in the Arkansas Senate from 2003 to 2008; and

WHEREAS, Irma Hunter Brown was the first African American woman elected to the Arkansas House and then became the first African American woman elected to the Arkansas Senate; and

WHEREAS, Irma Hunter Brown was a founder of the Arkansas Legislative



Black Caucus and served as its first chair; and

WHEREAS, Irma Hunter Brown was active in the National Conference of State Legislators (NCSL) and the National Black Caucus of State Legislators (NBCSL), serving on the executive committees of both; and

WHEREAS, Irma Hunter Brown served as an ambassador from NCSL to Japan and did a number of study tours of Germany, She represented the American Association of University Women at the first Nairobi conference, was a member of Rotary International, served on the board of directors of the Little Rock YWCA, was president of the Little Rock Parent Teachers Association Council, served on the board of the Museum of Discovery, served on the founding board of the Little Rock Central High National Historical Site, and was vice chair of Arkansas Educational Television Network Foundation; and

WHEREAS, Irma Hunter Brown was appointed president of Shorter College; and

WHEREAS, while serving in the Arkansas Senate, Irma Hunter Brown chaired the City, County, and Local Affairs Committee; and

WHEREAS Irma Hunter Brown stated she was proud to serve at a time when the grocery tax was cut in half and was also proud to be a part of the General Assembly's work to pass legislation to encourage and support early childhood education; and

WHEREAS, Irma Hunter Brown received the ACLU Humanitarian of the Year award in 2007, was recognized for her work in the passage of the Clean Air Act that ended smoking in restaurants, was a recipient of the Distinguished Citizen Award from Philander Smith College, and was appointed by the National Conference of State Legislators to the American Legacy Foundation; and

WHEREAS, After her twenty-four years of legislative service as an advocate for human rights, Irma Hunter Brown continued to serve the community and became a trustee of the Union African Methodist Episcopal Church and president of the Friends of Haven of Rest Cemetery, Inc., a nonprofit for

preservation of the Black historic cemetery in Little Rock; and

WHEREAS, In 2015, Irma Hunter Brown was recognized by a plaque on the Arkansas Civil Rights Heritage Trail project of the University of Arkansas at Little Rock Institute on Race and Ethnicity and she was inducted into the Arkansas Black Hall of Fame in 2019,

NOW THEREFORE,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE NINETY-FOURTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:

THAT the Senate recognize Irma Hunter Brown for her dedicated service to the State of Arkansas.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT upon adoption, a copy of this resolution shall be provided to Irma Hunter Brown by the Secretary of the Senate.