

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 155

The Speaker, on behalf of the entire membership of the House of Representatives, offered the following resolution:

1 A resolution of tribute offered as a memorial for Edward
2 Vaughn, former member of the House of Representatives.

3 Whereas, It was with great sadness that the members of this
4 legislative body learned about the passing of Edward "Ed" Vaughn.
5 He will be remembered for his fierce dedication to his constituents
6 in Detroit and the people of the state of Michigan; and

7 Whereas, Edward Vaughn was born in 1934 in Abbeville, Alabama,
8 but raised in Dothan, Alabama. He traveled north to pursue higher
9 education, earning a bachelor's degree in history and government
10 from Fisk University in Nashville, Tennessee, then studying at the
11 University of Illinois Law School for one year. Ed moved to
12 Michigan in hopes of finding work in the auto industry, but instead
13 he would find his calling as a community leader and a driver of the

1 Civil Rights Movement in Detroit. After marrying his wife, Wilma,
2 in 1957, Ed served in the United States Army until 1959, receiving
3 an honorable discharge. Upon returning to Detroit, Ed opened
4 Vaughn's Book Store on Dexter Avenue and sold books about African-
5 American history and books by Black authors to the people of
6 Detroit. The bookstore also became a gathering place for local
7 leaders seeking to advance the Civil Rights and Black Power
8 movements. Ed also took steps to build institutions and connections
9 outside his bookstore, founding the Pan-African Congress-USA in
10 Detroit, helping to organize the Detroit chapter of the Congress of
11 Racial Equity, and serving as a representative at the Sixth Pan-
12 African Congress; and

13 Whereas, In 1978, Ed Vaughn turned his attentions to state
14 government, being elected to represent the Eighth District in the
15 House of Representatives. He served as majority vice chair of the
16 Liquor Control Committee, and he also served on the committees on
17 Economic Development and Energy, Public Safety, and Urban Affairs.
18 After losing in the primary election in 1980, Ed returned to
19 Detroit to work in local politics and run Vaughn's Book Store. He
20 worked as an executive assistant to Detroit Mayor Coleman Young,
21 and he campaigned twice for a seat on the Detroit City Council; and

22 Whereas, Ed Vaughn returned to the House of Representatives in
23 1995, serving the Fourth District for three terms. During his
24 second stint in the Legislature, Ed served as chair of the
25 Committee on Constitutional and Civil Rights, as vice chair of the
26 Committee on Agriculture, and as a member of the committees on
27 Economic Development, Insurance, Judiciary, Regulatory Reform, and
28 Tourism. In 1999, when Detroit Public Schools faced a takeover by
29 the state, Ed fought fervently to retain local control of the

1 school district, even in the face of opposition from both parties.
2 Though he was ultimately unsuccessful in this one endeavor, he will
3 be remembered by the people of Detroit for his steadfast commitment
4 to the city's right to control its own destiny and his belief in
5 their ability to effect positive change; and

6 Whereas, After reaching his term limit in the House, Ed Vaughn
7 considered continuing his state service in the Senate, but after
8 losing a special primary election in February 2001, he returned to
9 Alabama to be with family. There, he became more involved with the
10 NAACP, being elected vice president of the Dothan/Wiregrass branch
11 and president of the NAACP Alabama State Conference and serving as
12 a delegate to the national NAACP convention in 2014. Vaughn's Book
13 Store closed in 1994, but in 2023 it was added to the National
14 Registry of Historic Places, and the people of Detroit are working
15 on plans to revitalize the site. The legacy of Vaughn's Book Store
16 as a place of learning, community, and Black empowerment will
17 continue to inspire Detroiters for generations to come; and

18 Whereas, Ed Vaughn is survived by his wife, Wilma, five of his
19 six children, and numerous grandchildren, nieces, nephews, cousins,
20 and friends. We offer our condolences to his loved ones as they
21 mourn his loss. Ed Vaughn's contributions to the city of Detroit,
22 to this chamber, and to the people of the state of Michigan will be
23 remembered; now, therefore, be it

24 Resolved by the House of Representatives, That we offer this
25 expression of our highest tribute to honor the memory of Edward
26 Vaughn, a member of the House of Representatives from 1979 to 1980
27 and from 1995 to 2000; and be it further

28 Resolved, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to the
29 Vaughn family as evidence of our lasting esteem for his memory.