

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

# HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 77

Session of  
2003

INTRODUCED BY J. WILLIAMS, WHEATLEY, PRESTON, BAKER, BEBKO-JONES, BELARDI, BISHOP, CAWLEY, COSTA, DAILEY, DERMODY, DeWEESE, DONATUCCI, D. EVANS, J. EVANS, FAIRCHILD, FLEAGLE, FORCIER, GEIST, GEORGE, GRUCELA, HARPER, HERMAN, JAMES, KELLER, KIRKLAND, LEACH, LEDERER, LEWIS, MAITLAND, MARKOSEK, McILHATTAN, PAYNE, PIPPY, PISTELLA, READSHAW, RIEGER, RUBLEY, SANTONI, SHANER, SOLOBAY, STABACK, SURRA, E. Z. TAYLOR, THOMAS, WATSON AND WOJNAROSKI, FEBRUARY 24, 2003

INTRODUCED AS NONCONTROVERSIAL RESOLUTION UNDER RULE 35,  
FEBRUARY 24, 2003

## A RESOLUTION

1 Commemorating the achievements and contributions the Honorable  
2 K. Leroy Irvis made to the General Assembly and the  
3 Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

4 WHEREAS, The Honorable K. Leroy Irvis graduated summa cum  
5 laude from the New York State Teachers College (now the State  
6 University of New York at Albany), received a master's degree  
7 from the State University of New York at Albany and earned a law  
8 degree from the University of Pittsburgh; and

9 WHEREAS, As a young community activist in Pittsburgh, Mr.  
10 Irvis organized the first demonstration in the United States  
11 against department stores for their discriminatory hiring  
12 practices against African Americans; and

13 WHEREAS, Mr. Irvis was elected to the Pennsylvania House of  
14 Representatives in 1958 and was subsequently reelected 15  
15 consecutive times; and

1 WHEREAS, Mr. Irvis served the House of Representatives and  
2 the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania with distinction as Minority  
3 Caucus Chairman, Majority Caucus Chairman, Minority Whip,  
4 Minority Leader and Majority Leader; and

5 WHEREAS, Mr. Irvis was elected the 130th Speaker of the House  
6 of Representatives, becoming the first Speaker of African-  
7 American heritage in the United States; and

8 WHEREAS, In his acknowledgment speech upon becoming Speaker,  
9 Mr. Irvis remarked, "You have elected not a black man to be  
10 Speaker of the House of Representatives, but more importantly,  
11 you have elected a man who happens to be black, and that is the  
12 direction that this country must continue to go"; and

13 WHEREAS, Mr. Irvis served ably as Speaker from 1977 to 1978  
14 and from 1983 to 1988 and sponsored a record 264 bills that  
15 became law during his legislative career; and

16 WHEREAS, Mr. Irvis was a legislative leader in many areas of  
17 public policy, including education, civil rights, health,  
18 consumer protection, housing and governmental reform; and

19 WHEREAS, Many organizations and institutions have honored Mr.  
20 Irvis for his distinguished record of public service, including  
21 the NAACP, University of Pennsylvania, Lincoln University of  
22 Pennsylvania, Urban League, University of Pittsburgh and the  
23 Pennsylvania Jewish Coalition; and

24 WHEREAS, As a fitting tribute to his distinguished service to  
25 the General Assembly and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, the  
26 South Office Building in the Capitol Complex in Harrisburg has  
27 been formally renamed the Speaker K. Leroy Irvis Office  
28 Building; therefore be it

29 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives honor and  
30 commemorate the lifetime of service and achievement of the

1 Honorable K. Leroy Irvis.