
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 773 Session of
2015

INTRODUCED BY STURLA, ROEBUCK, READSHAW, THOMAS, NEILSON,
GREINER, KIRKLAND, SAINATO, HENNESSEY, HICKERNELL, VEREB,
BIZZARRO, MILLARD, GERGELY, ROZZI, ROSS, HARHART, WATSON,
SCHREIBER, MURT, DONATUCCI, CALTAGIRONE, MENTZER, BARBIN,
PASHINSKI, PAYNE, DIGIROLAMO, COHEN, KINSEY, D. COSTA,
MARSICO, BRADFORD, MAHONEY AND FARINA, APRIL 1, 2016

INTRODUCED AS NONCONTROVERSIAL RESOLUTION UNDER RULE 35,
APRIL 1, 2016

A RESOLUTION

1 Honoring the life, memory and public service contributions of
2 Nelson M. Polite, Sr., of the City of Lancaster and extending
3 condolences to his family.

4 WHEREAS, Nelson M. Polite, Sr., died surrounded by family on
5 February 22, 2016, at 92 years of age in the same North Street
6 home in the City of Lancaster where he was born and lived all
7 his life except for four years while serving in the United
8 States Army during World War II; and

9 WHEREAS, A 1941 graduate of J.P. McCaskey High School, Mr.
10 Polite was a devoted member of the Bethel African Methodist
11 Episcopal Church, serving as chairman of the Elders Board and as
12 trustee emeritus; and

13 WHEREAS, In 1988, Mr. Polite retired after working 42 years
14 as a United States Department of Defense marketing and sales
15 manager; and

16 WHEREAS, Mr. Polite held public office for 14 years as a

1 member of the Lancaster City Council, serving two years as
2 council president, and as chairman of the Lancaster City
3 Planning Commission for a decade; and

4 WHEREAS, Mr. Polite founded the antidrug group DADDS
5 (Demonstrating Against Drug Dealers) and was an active leader of
6 the Lancaster Branch of the National Association for the
7 Advancement of Colored People, Crispus Attucks Community Center,
8 Arbor Place Youth Center, Conestoga Elks Lodge, United Way of
9 Lancaster County, J.P. McCaskey High School Alumni Association,
10 Lancaster Recreation Commission, SouthEast Lancaster Health
11 Services and many other organizations; and

12 WHEREAS, Following in the footsteps of his father, Abraham,
13 who helped found the Lancaster NAACP in 1923, Mr. Polite was a
14 civil rights icon who always worked for equality and fairness;
15 and

16 WHEREAS, In 1947, Mr. Polite formed Boy Scout Troop 15 at a
17 time when Boy Scout troops were not open to black children in
18 either the City of Lancaster or County of Lancaster; and

19 WHEREAS, In the summer of 1963, Mr. Polite helped to lead
20 protest marches at the segregated Rocky Springs Park pool and in
21 front of downtown Lancaster stores that offered few jobs to
22 African Americans; and

23 WHEREAS, After the 1968 assassination of Dr. Martin Luther
24 King, Jr., Mr. Polite walked the streets to urge calm; and

25 WHEREAS, As a member of the Mount Horeb Lodge No. 14, Mr.
26 Polite was elevated to the 33rd and last degree in the Ancient &
27 Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry in 1975, and served many
28 leadership roles, including vice president of the Statewide
29 Masonic organization and 68 years as a Prince Hall Mason; and

30 WHEREAS, When asked in 2015 what he would like his legacy to

1 be, Mr. Polite replied, "I want people to say Nelson Polite was
2 a good and useful person and he tried to do the best he could
3 for his neighborhood"; and

4 WHEREAS, A well-respected and strongly admired community
5 leader, Mr. Polite is deeply missed by all who knew him; and

6 WHEREAS, Mr. Polite, whose wife, Jean, died in 2004 after 54
7 years of marriage, is survived by their children, Deborah,
8 Nelson Jr., and Patrice, 12 grandchildren and many great-
9 grandchildren; therefore be it

10 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives honor the life,
11 memory and public service contributions of Nelson M. Polite,
12 Sr., of the City of Lancaster and extend condolences to his
13 family; and be it further

14 RESOLVED, That a copy of this resolution be transmitted to
15 the family of Nelson M. Polite, Sr.