

**STATE OF ALASKA
THE LEGISLATURE**

2020

Source
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**Legislative
Resolve No.**
16



Dedicating Capitol Room 106 in the Alaska State Capitol to the late Senator Bettye J. Davis.

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:

WHEREAS Senator Bettye J. Davis served as a member of the House of Representatives from the Seventeenth through the Nineteenth Alaska State Legislatures and as a member of the Senate from the Twenty-Second through the Twenty-Seventh Alaska State Legislatures; and

WHEREAS, during Representative Davis' time as a member of the House of Representatives, she served as both majority and minority whip and as a member of the House Health, Education, and Social Services Committee, serving as vice-chair of the committee during the Seventeenth Alaska State Legislature; and

WHEREAS, during Senator Davis' time as a member of the Senate, she served as a member of the Senate Health, Education, and Social Services Committee during the Twenty-Second and Twenty-Third Alaska State Legislatures, chair of the Senate Health, Education, and Social Services Committee during the Twenty-Fifth Alaska State Legislature, and chair of the Senate Health and Social Services Committee and vice-chair of the Senate Education

Committee during the Twenty-Sixth and Twenty-Seventh Alaska State Legislatures; and

WHEREAS Senator Davis' legislative accomplishments include passage of Acts that addressed suicide prevention, foster care, raising the minimum wage, mental health care, good governance, and authorizing youth courts throughout the state, and she sponsored a great deal of legislation aimed at improving the state and the lives of people in the state; and

WHEREAS Senator Davis began her long political career when she was elected to the Anchorage School Board where she served from 1982 to 1990, including two terms as board president; Senator Davis was appointed to the state Board of Education by Governor Tony Knowles in 1998 and served through 2000, including serving as chair from 1998 through 1999; Senator Davis returned to the Anchorage School Board as a member in 2013 and served until 2018; and

WHEREAS Senator Davis attended Grambling State University where she received her Bachelors of Social Work degree in 1971; and

WHEREAS Senator Davis arrived in Anchorage, Alaska, in 1972 as a military spouse and continued her higher education at the University of Alaska, Anchorage; and

WHEREAS Senator Davis began her career in family services working at the Alaska Psychiatric Institute from 1972 to 1975 as a nurse and social worker; and

WHEREAS, from 1975 to 1989, Senator Davis worked in various positions within the Department of Health and Social Services as a childcare specialist, social worker, and foster care coordinator; and

WHEREAS Senator Davis received countless awards and honors, including the title of 2010 Pioneer Woman of the Year from the North to the Future, Business and Professional Women, the 2010 Celebrate Liberty Award from the Alaska Civil Liberties Union, induction into the Alaska Women's Hall of Fame by the Alaska Women's Network in 2010, the Martin Luther King Jr. Foundation of Alaska Humanitarian Award, the Mayor's Award for Public Service, the Anchorage Convention and Visitors Bureau Meeting Champion Award, the YWCA Woman of Achievement Award, the Alaska Black Caucus President's Award, selection for the 2000 Notable American Women, selection for the Who's Who of American Women, and the Central Council Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska Award; and

WHEREAS Senator Davis was an active member of Shiloh Missionary Baptist Church and was affiliated with various organizations, including Delta Sigma Theta Sorority,

the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, the Business and Professional Women's Foundation, Alaska Women's Political Caucus, the Athena Society, Special Olympics, Zonta Anchorage, Campfire, Alaska Center for Children and Families, and March of Dimes; and

WHEREAS Senator Davis helped develop the next generation of state leaders, including many African American leaders, through mentorship and an eye for those with a dedication to public service; and

WHEREAS Senator Davis was a passionate public servant through the peaceful end of her life; and

WHEREAS Senator Davis was known as the "Conscience of the Legislature," passing legislation that continues to influence education, social issues, and economic development;

BE IT RESOLVED by the Alaska State Legislature that the House Health and Social Services Committee Room and House Education Committee Room, currently Room 106 of the Capitol, be dedicated to Senator Bettye J. Davis for her exemplary service as a member of the House of Representatives and the Senate; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED that a bronze plaque shall be placed on or near the door of the room celebrating Senator Bettye J. Davis' legislative achievements, dedication, and service to the state and the legislature, bearing the following inscription:

THE BETTYE J. DAVIS COMMITTEE ROOM

The Bettye J. Davis Committee Room memorializes the service and compassion of Bettye J. Davis, who served as a member of the House of Representatives from the Seventeenth through the Nineteenth Alaska State Legislatures and as a member of the Senate from the Twenty-Second through the Twenty-Seventh Alaska State Legislatures. She was the first African American woman elected to the Alaska State House of Representatives and the first African American elected to the Alaska State Senate. She served as a member of the House Health, Education, and Social Services Committee during the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Alaska State Legislatures,

including a term as vice-chair, and as chair of the Senate Health and Social Services Committee and vice-chair of the Senate Education Committee during the Twenty-Sixth and Twenty-Seventh Alaska State Legislatures. Her commitment to children and those living hard lives earned her recognition as the "Conscience of the Legislature." Her tireless advocacy for all Alaskans serves as an example for future generations of legislators.

A **COPY** of this resolution shall be presented to the family of the late Senator Bettye J. Davis.