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THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 1116 Session of  
2015

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INTRODUCED BY COOK-ARTIS, NOVEMBER 15, 2016

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INTRODUCED AS NONCONTROVERSIAL RESOLUTION UNDER RULE 35,  
NOVEMBER 15, 2016

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A RESOLUTION

1 Honoring the life and legacy of Harold B. Hairston, the first  
2 African-American Fire Commissioner of Philadelphia, and  
3 expressing condolences on his passing.

4 WHEREAS, Commissioner Hairston was appointed head of the  
5 Philadelphia Fire Department in 1992 by former Mayor Ed Rendell  
6 and served for 12 years until he retired in 2004; and

7 WHEREAS, Commissioner Hairston's career with the Philadelphia  
8 Fire Department spanned 40 years; and

9 WHEREAS, In 1964, Commissioner Hairston joined the  
10 Philadelphia Fire Department after completing a three-year tour  
11 of duty in the Army that included an assignment at West Point as  
12 a weapons instructor; and

13 WHEREAS, Commissioner Hairston was promoted to lieutenant in  
14 1971, captain in 1978, battalion chief in 1981 and deputy chief  
15 in 1986; and

16 WHEREAS, Commissioner Hairston oversaw the nation's fifth  
17 largest fire department with 2,500 employees and, under his  
18 leadership, fire deaths declined and the average response time

1 improved; and

2 WHEREAS, Commissioner Hairston received two unit citations  
3 for lifesaving rescues during his time on the force; and

4 WHEREAS, In 2003, Commissioner Hairston was named Fire Chief  
5 of the Year by the Metropolitan Fire Chiefs and Fire Official of  
6 the Year by the National Fire and Burglar Alarm Association; and

7 WHEREAS, Following his retirement, Commissioner Hairston  
8 joined CBS3 as an on-air consultant specializing in issues  
9 involving first responders, terrorism and fire safety; and

10 WHEREAS, Commissioner Hairston served on the boards of the  
11 American Red Cross of Southeastern Pennsylvania, the Delaware  
12 Valley Burn Foundation, the Police Athletic League, the Variety  
13 Club of the Delaware Valley and the Dad Vail Regatta; therefore  
14 be it

15 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives honor the life  
16 and legacy of Harold B. Hairston, the first African-American  
17 Fire Commissioner of Philadelphia, and express condolences on  
18 his passing; and be it further

19 RESOLVED, That a copy of this resolution be sent to his  
20 family.