

1 State of Arkansas
2 94th General Assembly
3 Regular Session, 2023

SR 39

4
5 By: Senator L. Chesterfield

6
7 **SENATE RESOLUTION**

8 TO RECOGNIZE IRMA HUNTER BROWN FOR HER SERVICE TO THE
9 STATE OF ARKANSAS.

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11
12 **Subtitle**

13 TO RECOGNIZE IRMA HUNTER BROWN FOR HER
14 SERVICE TO THE STATE OF ARKANSAS.

15
16 WHEREAS, Irma Lee Hunter Brown was born on January 5, 1939, in Tampa,
17 Florida, to Dovie Estoria White Hunter and Joseph Hartwell Hunter; and

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19 WHEREAS, Irma Hunter Brown grew up in Forsyth, Georgia and moved to
20 North Little Rock, Arkansas, to attend Shorter College; and

21
22 WHEREAS, Irma Hunter Brown received her associate's degree in
23 1958, and then transferred to Arkansas Agricultural, Mechanical, & Normal
24 College (now the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff), where she was a
25 member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority and graduated magna cum laude in 1960
26 with a double major in history and government and a minor in education; and

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28 WHEREAS, Irma Hunter Brown served in the Arkansas House of
29 Representatives from 1981 to 1998 and in the Arkansas Senate from
30 2003 to 2008; and

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32 WHEREAS, Irma Hunter Brown was the first African American woman elected
33 to the Arkansas House and then became the first African American woman
34 elected to the Arkansas Senate; and

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36 WHEREAS, Irma Hunter Brown was a founder of the Arkansas Legislative



1 Black Caucus and served as its first chair; and

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3 WHEREAS, Irma Hunter Brown was active in the National Conference of
4 State Legislators (NCSL) and the National Black Caucus of State Legislators
5 (NBCSL), serving on the executive committees of both; and

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7 WHEREAS, Irma Hunter Brown served as an ambassador from NCSL to Japan
8 and did a number of study tours of Germany, She represented the American
9 Association of University Women at the first Nairobi conference, was a member
10 of Rotary International, served on the board of directors of the Little Rock
11 YWCA, was president of the Little Rock Parent Teachers Association Council,
12 served on the board of the Museum of Discovery, served on the founding board
13 of the Little Rock Central High National Historical Site, and was vice chair
14 of Arkansas Educational Television Network Foundation; and

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16 WHEREAS, Irma Hunter Brown was appointed president of Shorter College;
17 and

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19 WHEREAS, while serving in the Arkansas Senate, Irma Hunter Brown
20 chaired the City, County, and Local Affairs Committee; and

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22 WHEREAS Irma Hunter Brown stated she was proud to serve at a time when
23 the grocery tax was cut in half and was also proud to be a part of the
24 General Assembly's work to pass legislation to encourage and support early
25 childhood education; and

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27 WHEREAS, Irma Hunter Brown received the ACLU Humanitarian of the Year
28 award in 2007, was recognized for her work in the passage of the Clean Air
29 Act that ended smoking in restaurants, was a recipient of the Distinguished
30 Citizen Award from Philander Smith College, and was appointed by the National
31 Conference of State Legislators to the American Legacy Foundation; and

32
33 WHEREAS, After her twenty-four years of legislative service as an
34 advocate for human rights, Irma Hunter Brown continued to serve the community
35 and became a trustee of the Union African Methodist Episcopal Church and
36 president of the Friends of Haven of Rest Cemetery, Inc., a nonprofit for

1 preservation of the Black historic cemetery in Little Rock; and

2
3 WHEREAS, In 2015, Irma Hunter Brown was recognized by a plaque on the
4 Arkansas Civil Rights Heritage Trail project of the University of Arkansas at
5 Little Rock Institute on Race and Ethnicity and she was inducted into the
6 Arkansas Black Hall of Fame in 2019,

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8 NOW THEREFORE,

9 BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE NINETY-FOURTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE
10 STATE OF ARKANSAS:

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12 THAT the Senate recognize Irma Hunter Brown for her dedicated service
13 to the State of Arkansas.

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15 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT upon adoption, a copy of this resolution shall be
16 provided to Irma Hunter Brown by the Secretary of the Senate.