

## House Resolution 714

By: Representatives Metze of the 55<sup>th</sup>, Douglas of the 78<sup>th</sup>, Bruce of the 61<sup>st</sup>, Glanton of the 75<sup>th</sup>, Williams of the 168<sup>th</sup>, and others

## A RESOLUTION

1 Honoring Dr. C. Clayton Powell on the occasion of his 90th birthday; and for other purposes.

2 WHEREAS, Dr. C. Clayton Powell, born in the southeastern town of Dothan, Alabama, has  
3 built a life of distinction and service in the arenas of scholarship, business, civil life, civil  
4 rights, and optometry; and

5 WHEREAS, Dr. C. Clayton Powell, a newcomer to Atlanta's prominent Booker T.  
6 Washington High School in 1942, swept a landslide election victory as President of the  
7 Student Government and soared academically to become the salutatorian of the 500-member  
8 Class of 1944; and

9 WHEREAS, he earned a bachelor's degree in biology from Morehouse College with a  
10 first-rate college record that included memberships in the Beta Kappa Chi National Scientific  
11 Society, the Morehouse College Glee Club, and Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, where he served  
12 as basileus; and

13 WHEREAS, Dr. C. Clayton Powell was the only black student in his class when, in 1949,  
14 he entered the Illinois College of Optometry (then known as the Chicago College of  
15 Optometry); and

16 WHEREAS, he graduated from optometry college and returned to Atlanta, where he  
17 launched a successful private practice; and

18 WHEREAS, Dr. C. Clayton Powell was among the first practicing optometrists and the first  
19 African American to be appointed to the National Eye Institute (NEI) of the National  
20 Institutes of Health (NIH), making decisions on proposals for eye research; and

21 WHEREAS, in 1956, Dr. C. Clayton Powell was elected vice-president of the Atlanta Branch  
22 of the NAACP and later elected Secretary of the Georgia State Conference of the NAACP  
23 Branches; and

24 WHEREAS, he filed the original petitions to desegregate the public schools in Atlanta with  
25 then Superintendent Ira Jarrell; and

26 WHEREAS, Dr. C. Clayton Powell has since held other memberships, which include the  
27 Metro Atlanta Chamber of Commerce, Morehouse Alumni Association, 100 Black Men of  
28 America, and National Optometric Association; and

29 WHEREAS, in 1969, he cofounded the National Optometric Association (NOA), an  
30 organization to serve black optometrists as well as provide them a solid voice and base of  
31 strength, which has continued to thrive and grow since its inception; and

32 WHEREAS, in 1973, Dr. C. Clayton Powell was a charter member of the Development  
33 Authority of Fulton County (DAFC) and served on the board for more than 40 years in  
34 several capacities such as executive director, chairman, and board member; and

35 WHEREAS, Dr. C. Clayton Powell, as a "living legend," has received numerous awards for  
36 his service to all humankind; and

37 WHEREAS, a man of deep and abiding faith, Dr. C. Clayton Powell is a member and deacon  
38 at The Olivet Church in Fayetteville, Georgia; and

39 WHEREAS, he is united in love and marriage to the former Deborah Small and is the father  
40 of C. Clayton Powell, Jr., and Rometta E. Powell; stepfather of Camille G. Stephens; and  
41 grandfather of Jordan, Arayah, Clayton Powell, and Malik; and

42 WHEREAS, by the example he has made of his life, Dr. C. Clayton Powell has been a source  
43 of inspiration to all who are fortunate enough to know him, and it is a pleasure to honor his  
44 90 years of life well-lived.

45 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES that  
46 the members of this body honor Dr. C. Clayton Powell on the remarkable occasion of his  
47 90th birthday and extend their most sincere best wishes for continued health and happiness.

48 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Clerk of the House of Representatives is authorized  
49 and directed to make an appropriate copy of this resolution available for distribution to Dr.  
50 C. Clayton Powell.