



City of Columbus

Office of City Clerk
90 West Broad Street
Columbus OH 43215-9015
columbuscitycouncil.org

Legislation Text

File #: 0194X-2012, **Version:** 1

To honor, recognize, and celebrate the life of Judge Robert M. Duncan, and to extend our sincerest condolences to his family and friends on the occasion of his passing Friday, November 2, 2012.

WHEREAS, Judge Robert M. Duncan was born in 1927 and raised in Urbana, Ohio, before coming to Columbus to attend Ohio State, where he graduated in 1948 and completed his law degree in 1952; and

WHEREAS, Judge Duncan served in the Army from 1952 to 1956, was hired by Ohio Attorney General William B. Saxbe, and was appointed to the federal bench by President Richard Nixon in 1974; and

WHEREAS, in the historic 1977 *Penick v. Columbus Board of Education* case, Judge Duncan ruled that Columbus schools were segregated by race; as a result, the district began busing about 35,000 students in 1979 to comply with his order; and

WHEREAS, in addition to his landmark *Penick* ruling, Judge Duncan will long be remembered as a trailblazer for African-American attorneys and judges, as he was the first African-American appointed general counsel in the Ohio attorney general's office; the first to be elected judge in Franklin County; the first to serve on the Ohio Supreme Court; the first to win a statewide election; the first to serve on the U.S. Court of Military Appeals; and the first to be appointed a federal district judge in Ohio; and

WHEREAS, Judge Duncan also served on the boards of Franklin University, Columbus College of Art and Design, and the American Red Cross of Greater Columbus and as the chairman of The Ohio State University's board of trustees; he was a member of the first class of inductees into the Ohio Civil Rights Hall of Fame in 2009; and

WHEREAS, Judge Duncan is survived by his wife of fifty-six years, Shirley, their three children, and innumerable other family, friends, colleagues, and admirers; now, therefore

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF COLUMBUS:

That this Council does hereby honor, recognize, and celebrate the life of Judge Robert M. Duncan, and extends our sincerest condolences to his family and friends on the occasion of his passing Friday, November 2, 2012