

1 A RESOLUTION adjourning the Senate in honor and loving memory of Bias
2 Sidney Tilford, Sr.

3 WHEREAS, Bias Sidney Tilford, Sr. was born in 1933, the son of Bias Tilford, Sr.
4 and Ernestine Brock Tilford-Harris, whose example of commitment, hard work, pride,
5 and faith shaped his life; and

6 WHEREAS, equally formative in the life of Bias Sidney Tilford, Sr., was his aunt,
7 Sallie Ree Tilford, an educator who taught during segregation and desegregation in Scott
8 County and later in Washington, D.C. At a time when education itself was an act of
9 courage, her life demonstrated discipline, purpose, and resolve. An example that helped
10 inspire Bias's lifelong commitment to expanding opportunity for others; and

11 WHEREAS, Bias Sidney Tilford, Sr. was born to carry forward a legacy rooted in
12 extraordinary courage. He was the great-great-great-grandson of Free Wyatt
13 Tilford, a man who refused to be enslaved. That same spirit defined Bias's life. He never
14 settled and he never allowed others to settle for less than they deserved; and

15 WHEREAS, Bias Sidney Tilford, Sr. was raised in Georgetown's historic Boston
16 community and came of age during segregation, when opportunity for Black Kentuckians
17 was constrained not by ability, but by access; and

18 WHEREAS, Bias Sidney Tilford, Sr. was a proud graduate of the historic Ed Davis
19 High School. Though he did not attend college, his education never ceased. He read
20 constantly, studied history deeply, and carried himself with the presence of a professor.
21 Many believe that if heaven grants honorary degrees, Bias Sidney Tilford, Sr. will surely
22 receive one; and

23 WHEREAS, Bias Sidney Tilford, Sr. became a pioneer in audiovisual technology,
24 photography, and media at a time when the work demanded skill, trust, and constant
25 movement. He worked concurrently for IBM and WLEX-TV, performing true double
26 duty during an era when such roles required exceptional discipline; and

27 WHEREAS, with IBM, Bias Sidney Tilford, Sr. served as an audiovisual technician

1 who traveled extensively across the United States photographing, documenting, and
2 producing slide and film presentations, long before email or digital transmission existed;
3 and

4 WHEREAS, at the same time, Bias Sidney Tilford, Sr. was hired by the original
5 ownership of WLEX-TV as a cameraman. He worked alongside sports director Billy
6 Thompson and was a part of the production team for The Adolph Rupp Sunday Show, the
7 widely watched program featuring the legendary University of Kentucky basketball
8 coach. Through this work, Bias Sidney Tilford, Sr. helped preserve a defining era of
9 Kentucky basketball and sports history; and

10 WHEREAS, during the Adolph Rupp coaching years and the early Joe B. Hall era,
11 the Tilford family was often summoned by the University of Kentucky's athletic
12 department to host recruits. Bias Sidney Tilford, Sr. and his wife Barbara Tilford, opened
13 their home to early Black basketball recruits. They offered hospitality, guidance, and a
14 sense of belonging. That same generosity was extended at times to football recruits as
15 well. The Tilford home became a place of trust when such spaces were rare; and

16 WHEREAS, Bias Sidney Tilford, Sr. made a lasting contribution to the Black press
17 as a photographer for the Louisville Defender, working out of its Bluegrass Lexington
18 office. His work helped preserve African American history and community voices during
19 a period when documentation itself was essential. His legacy is now permanently
20 recorded in a recently published book chronicling the history of the Louisville Defender;
21 and

22 WHEREAS, Bias Sidney Tilford, Sr. was also a trusted political advisor and
23 photographer to former Speaker of the Kentucky House of Representatives, William
24 "Bill" Kenton. He provided counsel, strategy, and visual documentation during a
25 significant period in Kentucky political history; and

26 WHEREAS, Bias Sidney Tilford, Sr.'s influence extended into arts and culture. He
27 was on the ground floor of the Cincinnati Jazz Festival and worked as a media field

1 coordinator. He oversaw on-site operations, organized advertising and promotional
2 efforts, and managed media logistics, helping establish the foundation of a nationally
3 recognized festival; and

4 WHEREAS, Bias Sidney Tilford, Sr. was a tireless advocate for economic
5 opportunities. He helped expand minority contract supplier opportunities through
6 Johnson Controls, he later served on the Minority Suppliers Advisory Committee for
7 Toyota, and he was a part of 7E Enterprises, a Black-led venture capital investment group
8 focused on supporting minority entrepreneurs and expanding access to capital; and

9 WHEREAS, Bias Sidney Tilford, Sr. was deeply rooted in the City of Georgetown.
10 He served on the Georgetown Planning Commission, the Georgetown City Council
11 alongside his wife Barbara, and was an active member of the Georgetown Men's
12 Business Group. He was instrumental in the planning and delivery of The Pavilion in
13 Georgetown, where his legacy remains etched on its very walls; and

14 WHEREAS, Bias Sidney Tilford, Sr.'s commitment to civil rights and journalism is
15 recognized on the wall of fame at the Lyric Theatre in Lexington. Together, Bias and his
16 wife Barbara were inducted into the NAACP of Kentucky Hall of Fame; and

17 WHEREAS, Bias Sidney Tilford, Sr. was a devoted member of First Baptist
18 Church of Georgetown. He raised his family in faith and lived it through example rather
19 than words. He served as a father figure to many who never had the guidance God
20 intended, offering discipline, encouragement, and love rooted in responsibility and grace;
21 and

22 WHEREAS, at family gatherings, Bias Sidney Tilford, Sr. was the heart of the
23 room, encouraging grandchildren to recite poems, perform songs, and share routines,
24 creating traditions filled with laughter, confidence, and joy; and

25 WHEREAS, on February 12, 2026, Bias Sidney Tilford, Sr. traversed these earthly
26 bounds at the age of 92, leaving behind a legacy defined by faith, service, storytelling,
27 mentorship, and an unwavering belief that opportunity should exist for all; and

1 WHEREAS, Bias Sidney Tilford, Sr. was a devoted husband. He is survived by his
2 wife Barbara; sons Barry and Bradley Tilford; and a host of grandchildren and great-
3 grandchildren. He was preceded in death by his son Bias Tilford, Jr.; and

4 WHEREAS, with the passing of Bias Sidney Tilford, Sr., the world has lost one of
5 its most notable Black custodians of civic and personal integrity, bar none;

6 NOW, THEREFORE,

7 ***Be it resolved by the Senate of the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of***
8 ***Kentucky:***

9 ➔Section 1. The Senate extends its sincere condolences to the family, friends, and
10 community of Bias Sidney Tilford, Sr. upon his passing.

11 ➔Section 2. When the Senate adjourns this day, it does so in honor and loving
12 memory of Bias Sydney Tilford, Sr.

13 ➔Section 3. The Clerk of the Senate is directed to transmit a copy of this
14 Resolution to Senator Gerald Neal for delivery to the family.