HOUSE RESOLUTION No. 6043

A RESOLUTION recognizing, honoring and commemorating the life and service of Representative Melody McCray-Miller.

WHEREAS, Today, we recognize and honor the life and service of our late colleague, Representative Melody McCray-Miller; and

WHEREAS, Born on November 18, 1956, Melody was a lifelong resident of Wichita, Kansas, whose dedication to education, public service, business leadership and community improvement spanned more than three decades; and

WHEREAS, Melody earned a bachelor's degree in psychology from the University of Houston and later obtained a secondary school teaching certificate from Wichita State University; and

WHEREAS, Melody began her career in education teaching at Mayberry Middle School and Southeast High School from 1989 through 1995 and inspired students through mentorship, civic engagement and instruction; and

WHEREAS, Returning to the classroom in 2021 as an adjunct instructor of American government and political science at Wichita State University, Melody continued to prepare future civic leaders and encourage their participation in public life; and

WHEREAS, As an entrepreneur and business leader, Melody, with her late husband, Larry Miller, owned and operated Miller's Bar-B-Que, a well-known Wichita restaurant whose popularity was built in part on its distinctive baked bean recipe. They later expanded the enterprise by marketing Miller's Bar-B-Que Famous Baked Beans nationwide through retail distribution. Melody served as chief executive officer of the family business and principal owner and co-founder of Miller's Inc.; and

WHEREAS, A Kansas Health Foundation Fellow and alumna of the Kansas Leadership Center, Melody demonstrated a commitment to leadership development and strengthened community participation in public policy; and

WHEREAS, Continuing a family legacy of public service and following in the footsteps of her father, Billy Q. McCray, the first African American commissioner in Sedgwick County and a former state legislator, Melody McCray-Miller became the first African American woman elected to represent the 4th District on the Sedgwick County Commission, serving from 1996 through 2000; and

WHEREAS, During her service in county government and later as a state legislator, Melody championed reforms in early childhood education and the juvenile justice system, working to improve outcomes for Kansas children and families; and

WHEREAS, Melody went on to serve as a Kansas State Representative for the 89th District from 2005 through 2013, where she earned respect for principled leadership and her belief that every Kansan deserves a voice in their own destiny; and

WHEREAS, During her tenure in the Kansas House of Representatives, Melody served as Ranking Minority Member of the Corrections and Juvenile Justice Committee and as a member of the Committees on Children and Families, Taxation and Elections, Financial Institutions and Insurance, Children's Issues and Parole Board Oversight, providing thoughtful leadership on matters affecting Kansas families and communities; and

WHEREAS, While serving in the Legislature, Melody sponsored measures to strengthen worker protections and honor Kansas veterans, including legislation designating the junction of Interstate 70 and U.S. Highway 183 in Hays, Kansas, as the CW2 Bryan J. Nichols Fallen Veterans Memorial Interchange; and

WHEREAS, Melody went on to serve as chief executive officer of the Urban League of Kansas and as vice chairperson of the Kansas Democratic Party from 2015 through 2017, continuing her commitment to civic leadership and community advancement; and

WHEREAS, In 2023, Melody was elected to serve as an at-large member of the Wichita Board of Education, cultivating a districtwide perspective grounded in care, integrity and a genuine belief in the potential of every student. She actively worked to ensure opportunity and access for all learners, leaving a lasting impact on Wichita Public Schools before stepping down due to health concerns; and

WHEREAS, Colleagues and community leaders remember Melody as an intelligent, thoughtful and compassionate public servant whose measured voice, independence of judgment and commitment to understanding community needs strengthened public institutions and improved lives; and

WHEREAS, Melody was a symbol of selflessness in public life whose tenacity, perseverance and willingness to be a voice for the people helped shape a generation of leadership in Wichita and across the State of Kansas; and

WHEREAS, Melody McCray-Miller passed away on February 22, 2026, leaving a legacy of leadership, service and dedication that will continue to inspire future generations: Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the House of Representatives of the State of Kansas: That we recognize, honor and commemorate the life and service of Representative Melody McCray-Miller and celebrate her enduring contributions to the people of Kansas.

I hereby certify that the above RESOLUTION originated in the HOUSE, and was adopted by that body

_____

_____

Speaker of the House.

_____

Chief Clerk of the House.