

## 2017-J2355

Senate Resolution No. 2355

BY: Senator PARKER

MOURNING the death of Dr. Charles Davis, artistic director and founding elder of DanceAfrica, distinguished citizen and devoted member of his community

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body to pay tribute to those individuals of artistic significance whose creative talents have contributed to the cultural enrichment of our communities and our Nation; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Charles Davis of Durham, North Carolina, died on Sunday, May 14, 2017, at the age of 80; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Charles Davis, affectionately known as Baba Chuck, is one of the foremost teachers and choreographers of traditional African dance in America; and

WHEREAS, In 1968, Baba Chuck Davis founded the Chuck Davis Dance Company in New York City; after moving to Durham, he established the African American Dance Ensemble in 1983; and

WHEREAS, Throughout his illustrious career, Baba Chuck Davis has served as a panelist for several programs of the National Endowment for the Arts, and was a vital member of the Board of Directors of the North

Carolina Arts Council since 1991; and

WHEREAS, For his exceptional talent, and gifts to mankind and the arts, Baba Chuck Davis was the recipient of numerous awards and accolades including the AARP Certificate of Excellence, the North Carolina Dance Alliance Award, the 1990 North Carolina Artist Award, and the North Carolina Order of the Long Leaf Pine, as well as the 1992 North Carolina Award in Fine Arts, the state's highest honor; and

WHEREAS, In 1996, Baba Chuck Davis and the African American Dance Ensemble were awarded a substantial grant from the National Dance Residency Program, a three-year initiative launched in 1994 by the New York Foundation for the Arts and funded by the Pew Charitable Trusts; and

WHEREAS, Baba Chuck Davis received many honorary doctorates from several universities including Medgar Evers College in 1998; most recently, he and DanceAfrica were cited as one of America's Irreplaceable Dance Treasures: The First 100 by the Dance Heritage Coalition; and

WHEREAS, DanceAfrica is a vibrant annual celebration of African and African-American dance, music, and culture, featuring performances, master classes, a film series, a dance party, and the one-and-only DanceAfrica bazaar; and

WHEREAS, Armed with a humanistic spirit and imbued with a sense of compassion, Baba Chuck Davis leaves behind a legacy which will long

endure the passage of time and will remain as a comforting memory to all he served and befriended; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to mourn the death of Dr. Charles Davis, artistic director and founding elder of DanceAfrica, distinguished citizen and devoted member of his community; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the family of Dr. Charles Davis.