

Testimonial Resolution for The Honorable Judge Bernice Bouie Donald

UNITED STATES CIRCUIT JUDGE, SIXTH CIRCUIT COURT OF APPEALS

Submitted by Councilmember Fred Durhal III

WHEREAS Judge Bernice B. Donald was nominated to the United States Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit by President Barack Hussein Obama on December 1, 2010 and re-nominated in January 2011. On September 6, 2011, she was confirmed by the United States Senate with a final vote of 96-2. This historic appointment made her the first female African American to serve as judge on the Sixth Circuit. Prior to joining the Court of Appeals, Judge Donald became the first female African American elected to serve as judge in the State of Tennessee in 1982. In 1988, Judge Donald made history becoming the nation's first female African American to be appointed as a bankruptcy judge. In 1995, President William Jefferson Clinton appointed Judge Donald to serve as judge on the United States District Court for the Western District of Tennessee, making her the first female African American to serve on that court; **and**

WHEREAS Judge Donald has received over 100 awards for her professional, civic, and community activities, in over four decades serving on the bench. Notably, Judge Donald received the American Bar Association (ABA) and the National Bar Association's Lifetime Achievement Awards, she was inducted into the ABA's "Hall of Feminism"; she was recognized by the Tennessee General Assembly for her lifetime of dedicated service, and in 2020 the ABA created the "Judge Bernice B. Donald Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Award" in her honor; **and**

WHEREAS Judge Donald has lectured and trained judges around the globe, an internationally recognized legal scholar. Judge Donald frequently serves as faculty for numerous international programs in countries including, Romania, Mexico, Turkey, Brazil, Bosnia, Botswana, South Africa, Namibia, Pakistan, Kyrgyzstan, Myanmar, Senegal, Rwanda, Tanzania, Russia, Egypt, Morocco, Thailand, Uganda, Kenya, Cambodia, Vietnam, The Philippines, and Armenia. In 2003, Judge Donald led a People-to-People delegation to Johannesburg and Cape Town, South Africa as well as traveled to Zimbabwe to monitor the trial of a judge accused of judicial misconduct; **and**

WHEREAS Judge Donald's demonstrated record of generosity and service has made a profound imprint in the State of Michigan and the City of Detroit. As a close friend and confidant to the great Judge Damon Keith of Detroit, she authored and published a phenomenal article honoring his life and legacy. She has trained several members of the federal bar and federal court personnel on implicit bias. She also helped organize the Sixth Circuit Judicial Conference to be held in Detroit. In 2015, she brought Bryan Stevenson, the author and featured lawyer in the movie "Just Mercy" to speak at an event in Detroit. Judge Donald has been invited as a featured speaker at various educational programs, has published scholarship with her former law clerk, Detroit attorney Chuck Bullock, has served as the lead judge in the moot court finals at the University of Michigan Law School, given various speeches for the women's program at the University of Michigan State Law School, and frequently attended Damon Keith's Soul Food Luncheons. In 2017, Judge Donald was honored with the MLK Dream Keeper Award at the Detroit Athletic Club and served on the selection and presentation committee for three years; **and**

WHEREAS Judge Donald is a graduate of the University of Memphis Cecil C. Humphreys School of Law. She also earned a master's degree in Judicial Studies from Duke University and an honorary Doctors in Law from Suffolk University. She is a proud member of Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Incorporated. **NOW, THEREFORE BE IT**

RESOLVED That Councilmember Fred Durhal III and members of the Detroit City Council recognize and revere the contributions and dedication of **JUDGE BERNICE BOUIE DONALD** for being a trailblazer and leaving such a stellar imprint for others to follow. Living as "Each day is a gift from God – the service that we render is our gift to God."

TCB – 07/12/2022

JULY 12, 2022