



## MICHIGAN CIVIL RIGHTS COMMISSION

# RESOLUTION

## HONORING THE LIFE OF JUDGE DALTON ROBERSON, SR.

**WHEREAS**, the Michigan Civil Rights Commission joins the family, friends and colleagues of the Honorable Judge Dalton Roberson, Sr., in honoring his committed life to justice and public service. Judge Roberson was born on May 11, 1937 and died on November 10, 2020 at the age of 83. While the dates designate his birth and death, his story is truly told by the noble life he lived between these dates; and

**WHEREAS**, although there was no high school near where they lived in rural Alabama, Judge Roberson's family recognized the power of education so much that his father paid a local farmer \$2 a week to provide a daily ride in the back of his truck to the nearest school; and

**WHEREAS**, after graduating from Mobile Training School in Mobile, Alabama, Judge Roberson moved to Detroit in 1953. Judge Roberson served his country as a boom operator in the United States Air Force. After being honorably discharged, Judge Roberson attended Michigan State University, where he earned a bachelor's degree and was active in the Delta Pi Chapter of Kappa Alpha Psi.

**WHEREAS**, Judge Roberson then worked for the City of Detroit's Department of Social Services before deciding to enroll in what was then the Detroit College of Law. Upon obtaining his Juris Doctor from the Detroit College of Law in 1967, Judge Roberson worked as a Wayne County Assistant Prosecutor, Assistant U. S. Attorney, and in private practice. Judge Roberson was appointed to the Michigan Civil Rights Commission in 1972, where he served until Governor William Milliken appointed him to the Detroit Recorder's Court in 1974; and

**WHEREAS**, Judge Roberson was elected as Chief Judge of the Recorder's Court in 1987. The National Conference of Black Lawyers named Roberson Judge of the Year in 1992. Detroit Recorder's Court merged with Wayne County Circuit Court in 1997, where Judge Roberson continued to serve as a judge until retiring in 1999. After a brief retirement of playing golf in

Diamondhead, Mississippi, Judge Roberson returned to Detroit in 2013 and frequently presided in Wayne County Circuit Court as a visiting judge until his passing; and

**WHEREAS**, Judge Roberson is remembered for the sage counsel and advice he provided to assist both young prosecutors and defense attorneys who appeared before him. Judge Roberson was committed to making the legal profession more diverse. He is often cited as an inspiration, role model, and mentor by a great many African American attorneys; and

**WHEREAS**, Judge Roberson was respected as a champion of justice who treated those who appeared before him, having been accused of a crime, with the same respect and humanity as he did their attorneys. Judge Roberson leaves a lasting legacy of striving for both equity and excellence in all aspects of the practice of law; and

**THEREFORE, be it resolved** that the Michigan Civil Rights Commission commemorates Judge Dalton Roberson, Sr.'s, life and his contributions to the City of Detroit, the State of Michigan, and beyond. We join his family, friends and colleagues in remembering him as a torch bearer who loved the law; and

**Be it further resolved**, that on this 25<sup>th</sup> day of January 2021, the Commission recognizes and honors Judge Dalton Roberson, Sr.'s legacy of service and commitment to the American Justice System.



Passed unanimously on the 25th day of January 2021, by the  
**MICHIGAN CIVIL RIGHTS COMMISSION**

Stacie Clayton, Chair

Zenna Faraj Elhasan, Vice Chair

Ira Combs, Secretary

Richard Corriveau

Regina Gasco-Bentley

Gloria E. Lara

Anupama Kosaraju

Portia L. Roberson