

2021-K80

Assembly Resolution No. 80

BY: M. of A. Wallace

CELEBRATING the life and legacy of The Honorable
Hugh B. Scott, United States Magistrate Judge for
the Western District of New York, distinguished
citizen and devoted member of his community

WHEREAS, It is the custom of this Legislative Body to publicly mourn
the death of prominent citizens of the State of New York whose lifework
and civic endeavor served to enhance the reputation of the State; and

WHEREAS, It is with feelings of deepest regret that this Legislative
Body records the passing of The Honorable Hugh B. Scott, noting the
significance of the loss of a man whose altruistic spirit will be
greatly missed; and

WHEREAS, A native of Buffalo, New York, Judge Hugh B. Scott, who
spent more than three decades on the bench, died on Saturday, February
20, 2021; and

WHEREAS, Hugh B. Scott grew up on Buffalo's Woodlawn Avenue and
moved to Amherst with his family as a teenager, where he was one of just
three black students to graduate from Sweet Home High School in 1967;
and

WHEREAS, Just four years later, Hugh B. Scott was one of a small

number of Blacks to graduate from Niagara University; he then went on to become a member of the University at Buffalo Law School's Class of 1974; and

WHEREAS, Hugh B. Scott began his legal career as an assistant county attorney with the Erie County Law Department and later joined the Buffalo Law Department as an assistant corporation counsel; he then served as the first African-American assistant U.S. Attorney for the Western District of New York; and

WHEREAS, In 1979, Hugh B. Scott joined the state attorney general's Buffalo Office as deputy assistant attorney general-in-charge of claims and litigation; he went on to become assistant attorney general-in-charge of the Buffalo regional office of the New York State Department of Law, and was the first African-American to head the second largest regional office in the State of New York; and

WHEREAS, His illustrious judicial career began when he ran for Buffalo City Court judge in 1984, and was elected to a 10-year term, then re-elected in 1994; he left that position in 1995 to ascend to the federal bench as a United States Magistrate Judge, the esteemed position he held until stepping down in 2015; and

WHEREAS, A longtime champion of equal access to the justice system, Judge Hugh B. Scott created the U.S. District Court's Re-entry Court, in which convicted defendants who have served their sentence receive job training, legal assistance, and other help to ease their transition back into society; and

WHEREAS, Furthermore, this revered man served as a role model and mentor for countless law students and practitioners; he held numerous leadership roles in Buffalo community organizations, including Niagara

University, Canisius College, Buffalo Urban League, the New York State Judicial Task Force on Domestic Violence, Sisters of Charity Hospital, the National Federation for Just Communities of Western New York, and many more; and

WHEREAS, An emeritus member of the Dean's Advisory Council, Judge Hugh B. Scott also served UB Law as an adjunct professor, teaching trial technique courses for both the J.D. program and the criminal law and general Master of Laws programs; additionally, he presided over the first federal court trial held in the law school's Francis M. Letro Courtroom; and

WHEREAS, The proud recipient of numerous awards and accolades, Judge Hugh B. Scott was honored by The Buffalo Law Review for his distinguished service to the Western New York community and UB Law School; he was also named recipient of the 2021 Edwin F. Jaeckle Award, the highest honor bestowed by UB School of Law and the Law Alumni Association; and

WHEREAS, Judge Hugh B. Scott devoted his life to the pursuit of justice and recognized that our system of justice depends vitally on the humanity of those working in it; as a prosecutor and as a jurist, he exuded those human traits which both instill confidence in and breathe life into our system of justice: impartiality, fairness, decency, efficiency, and above all, heart; and

WHEREAS, Blending wisdom and wit, Judge Hugh B. Scott had an uncanny ability to connect, in a heartfelt way, with all who appeared before him, and sincerely earned the admiration, esteem and affection of his colleagues; and

WHEREAS, Though he was truly a trailblazer, serving as the first

black Assistant United States Attorney and the first black federal judge ever in the Western District, Judge Hugh B. Scott's greatness was truly defined not by the color of his skin but by the contents of both his remarkable character and his overflowing heart; and

WHEREAS, While he was passionate about many things, above all his greatest passion was being a husband to his devoted wife, Trudy, and a father to his two beloved sons, Hugh Jr. and Everett; and

WHEREAS, Armed with a humanistic spirit, and imbued with a sense of compassion, Judge Hugh B. Scott's life was a portrait of service, 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 celebrate the life and legacy of The Honorable Hugh B. Scott, and expressing its deepest condolences to his family; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the family of The Honorable Hugh B. Scott.