

(**Washington D.C.**) - "Today we mourn the passing of Oliver White Hill, a man who dedicated his life and legal talents to confronting and eradicating decades of racial inequality and injustice.

"With roots in Richmond, Virginia and Washington, DC, Mr. Hill spent his early years as a civil rights attorney in Richmond, where he fought for better pay, full access to transportation, and better educational facilities for African American teachers and students.

"After admirably serving our nation overseas in the Army during World War II, Mr. Hill returned to the U.S. to continue the fight against racial discrimination. For Oliver White Hill, 'separate but equal' was not enough. His efforts included shouldering the cause of the African American students at the all-black R.R. Morton High School in Farmville, Virginia. The resulting desegregation lawsuit was one of several cases decided collectively as *Brown v. Board of Education* by the U.S. Supreme Court in 1954. That landmark decision helped bring America's segregation-era to an end.

"While Oliver White Hill is best known as the fierce, tireless civil rights litigator who helped bring to a close America's segregation-era, his involvement in the community went beyond the courtroom. In 1949, he became the first African American elected to the Richmond City Council since Reconstruction and continued his public service in both local and federal government posts. Mr. Hill also served as an officer or member on the boards of many organizations, including the National Legal Committee of the NAACP, the National Bar Association, the Southern Conference for Human Welfare, the Virginia State Bar Bench/Bar Relations Committee, and the Old Dominion Bar Association, which he co-founded.

"For his decades of dedication to the law and accomplishments in the field of civil rights, Oliver White Hill earned many accolades from organizations such as the National Bar Association, the NAACP Legal Defense Fund and the American Bar Association. In 2005, Oliver White Hill received the Spingarn Medal, the highest honor of the NAACP. In 1999, President Clinton awarded Mr. Hill the highest honor the nation can bestow, the Presidential Medal of Freedom.

"In 2000, several legal admirers founded the Oliver White Hill Foundation. The Foundation encourages young lawyers to become advocates in the field of individual rights and liberties and to carry on Mr. Hill's civil rights work. Lawyers inspired by the Foundation work with the hope that discrimination based on race, gender, national origin, sexual preference, and religion will ultimately be abolished, just as Mr. Hill has spent his life hoping for and working towards.

"Earlier this year, I had the honor of celebrating Oliver White Hill's 100th birthday. He was a man of principle and virtue. He will always be remembered for making the City of Richmond, the Commonwealth of Virginia, and this entire country a place of promise and opportunity for all.

"It is highly unlikely that I would be a member of Congress today, had it not been for the work of Mr. Hill and others."

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