



RESOLUTION HONORING

NORMA REID HOUSTON

THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA SYSTEM

WHEREAS, Norma Houston has served as a member of the president’s senior leadership team for the University of North Carolina System since August 2020, as chief of staff; and

WHEREAS, Norma Houston’s public service and contribution to the great state of North Carolina has spanned the last 33 years. She previously provided professional and dedicated service to the people of North Carolina in the Office of the President Pro Tempore of the North Carolina Senate, Dare County, and the Department of Justice; and

WHEREAS, Norma Houston is fiercely loyal and devoted to the University. As chief of staff, she willed the System through a pandemic and one of the most tragic natural disasters in our state’s history. She possesses a near-limitless dedication and drive to protect those she serves and has given more to the State of North Carolina than most people could ever imagine. From caring for the fish at CSLD or ensuring the police dogs had a bed for rest at The Dillon, to her technical expertise and tireless energy in times of crisis for our state, our individual campuses, and our University System, Norma Houston has demonstrated an immeasurable love for our state and set the bar for what it means to be a true public servant; and

WHEREAS, Norma Houston has served as a faculty member at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill’s School of Government since 2006 and has vigorously advocated for the rights and recognition of non-tenure track faculty. This included her leadership of a Systemwide workgroup dedicated to developing policy recommendations that would benefit faculty across the entire UNC System; and

WHEREAS, Norma Houston advanced numerous University policies that improved campus safety for decades to come, including a threat assessment regulation that focuses on intervention and support, a leading evidence-based practice. She also guided a process to improve communications during campus emergencies. Her commitment to the safety and well-being of campus communities, at the core, reflects her deep devotion to students. From her decisive leadership during the COVID-19 pandemic to her unwavering advocacy for affordable student health insurance and behavioral health services, she has consistently championed the needs of our students; and

WHEREAS, Norma Houston has been a steadfast advocate for sound procurement practices, supporting transparency, efficiency, and fiscal responsibility to ensure that University resources are utilized effectively and in the best interest of students and taxpayers; and

WHEREAS, Norma Houston has served multiple, invaluable roles at the University of North Carolina. Her service to the State of North Carolina equipped her to shepherd the launch of President Peter Hans’ administration with savvy over policy, law, and operations that meant there was nothing she hadn’t seen and no decision or action too daunting for her to lead. Her contributions are incalculable. Not many days passed when she did not ably transition from counseling chiefs of staff and law enforcement officials with a detailed command of the facts to reading statutes late at night with the eye of a professor and practicing attorney; and

WHEREAS, Norma Houston is the very definition of a strong leader with a tender heart, always willing to lend an ear or a piece of candy. She is everyone’s go-to expert and sounding board, as evidenced by her cellphone notification which, sounds off approximately every 23 seconds: “Houston, we have a problem”; and

WHEREAS, she provided wise guidance and advice, and has earned the respect and trust of the Board of Governors, UNC System leadership and staff, chancellors, and colleagues across the University and the state; and

WHEREAS, she will conclude her service as chief of staff for the UNC System on February 28, 2025.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Governors of the University of North Carolina extends its deepest gratitude and appreciation to Norma Reid Houston for her outstanding service, exemplary work, dedication, and friendship, and wishes her all the best in her well-earned and richly deserved retirement.

This is the 27th day of February 2025.

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Wendy F. Murphy	Pearl Burris-Floyd
Chair, UNC Board of Governors	Secretary, UNC Board of Governors