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PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 117<sup>th</sup> CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

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## *House of Representatives*

### TRIBUTE IN MEMORY OF BETTY THOMPSON

HON. CORI BUSH

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, July 19, 2021*

Betty Thompson was a deeply beloved figure in St. Louis, not only for her groundbreaking political career and trailblazing civil rights work, but most notably for her warm and giving spirit. Her altruistic reach transcended the chaos of politics and gave space for the beauty in public service. She remained true to her values and led from a place of service and deep love of community. This approach to her work led her to opening so many doors in politics for our region as a barrier-breaking politician who was the first Black woman to serve on the University City Council. Not only did she open doors, but she extended her hand to bring the next generation of leaders along with her. Her passion and vigor was ever present, as she famously said, “We want you to wake up! Get up! Sit up! Look up! Dress up! Eat up! Pray up! Pay up! And if you can’t do that, then you should just stay home and shut up!”

She so beautifully took issues that most pained her, like her struggle with alopecia, and turned them into positive change in her legislative efforts. Ms. Thompson sponsored legislation that created a pathway for children with alopecia to receive hairpieces. This legislation was essential to Medicaid developing a policy that gave provision for expenses related to scalp prosthesis.

This, along with so many other efforts of Representative Thompson, are a wonderful depiction of the vigor and depth with which she loved her community. That love will unquestionably be widely missed — but it was a love so genuine it will most certainly leave rippling effects for years to come. So though we mourn her loss, we also celebrate her life. It was a life well lived indeed.

CORI BUSH

*Member of Congress*