



*News from*  
Office of the Mayor  
August 18, 2008  
For Immediate Release

CONTACT: Paul Rose  
(510) 238.7914  
(510) 388.6721  
Email: [pwrose@oaklandnet.com](mailto:pwrose@oaklandnet.com)

**STATEMENT FROM THE MAYOR RE:**  
**Passing of Mrs. Willa Dellums**

OAKLAND – Mayor Ron Dellums’ mother, Willa Dellums, passed away Sunday morning at 3am in Oakland. She was 89 years old.

“Naturally, I am very saddened by the passing of my mother who meant so much to me and to my family,” said Mayor Dellums. “She instilled in me the values and integrity that allow me to be the person that I am today. She was an incredible person who only wanted the best for me, as I developed both personally and politically. As I was growing up in Oakland, she prayed that I wouldn’t go down the wrong road and that support allowed me to pursue an education and taught me that listening to others is not only important, but an essential tool in order to make a difference. Even though she did not attend college, she possessed a tremendous thirst for knowledge and a visionary spirit. My mother imparted on my sister and me a strong belief in the value of education and, along with my father, pushed us to achieve at every step. I believe she lived out her dreams of education through her children and I am very proud of that.

“My mother taught me that wherever I go for the rest of my life, you should be able to stand very tall and very proud as a human being. She reinforced my humanity, my sense of myself, and my own sense of pride.”

Mrs. Dellums was married to Mr. Vernie Dellums for 43 years until his death in April 1978. She was born in Texas and lived on Wood Street in West Oakland upon moving to the city. Mrs. Dellums influenced four generations of her family.

###