

2004 SESSION

ENROLLED

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 209

Celebrating the life of Chief Captain O. Nelson.

Agreed to by the House of Delegates, January 16, 2004
Agreed to by the Senate, January 22, 2004

WHEREAS, Chief Captain O. Nelson, for 32 years chief of the Rappahannock tribe and one of the leaders of Virginia's Indian community, died on March 21, 2003; and

WHEREAS, a resident of Indian Neck in King and Queen County, Captain Nelson succeeded his father as chief of the Rappahannocks in 1963; and

WHEREAS, the Rappahannocks, currently numbering about 300, originated near the Rappahannock River, where they were well-established when Captain John Smith arrived in 1608; and

WHEREAS, moved to a reserve in Indian Neck in the early 1700s, many of the Rappahannocks and their descendants, including Chief Nelson, remained in the area; and

WHEREAS, during his tenure as leader of the Rappahannocks, Chief Nelson worked at the Jamestown Festival Park's Indian Village as a history interpreter; and

WHEREAS, Chief Nelson led the ongoing effort to gain state and federal recognition for the Rappahannock tribe, winning General Assembly recognition for the tribe in 1983; and

WHEREAS, in honor of his long and dedicated service, Chief Nelson was honored by his tribe with his election as Honorary Chief for Life in 1998; and

WHEREAS, throughout a long and distinguished career, Chief Nelson served his people with great diligence, sensitivity, and wisdom; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly hereby note with great sadness the loss of an outstanding Indian leader and Virginian, Chief Captain O. Nelson; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the family of Chief Captain O. Nelson as an expression of the respect in which his memory is held by the members of the General Assembly.

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