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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 650

Offered January 12, 2005

Prefiled January 11, 2005

Celebrating the life of Merle Gruber Painley.

Patron—Van Yahres, Bell and Landes

WHEREAS, Merle Gruber Painley of Keswick, retired executive director of the Mental Health Association of Charlottesville-Albemarle, died September 22, 2004; and

WHEREAS, Merle Painley was widely respected for her commitment, on the local and state level, to persons with mental illness; and

WHEREAS, a gifted liaison and a strong voice for consumers of mental health services, Merle Painley advocated for mental health issues and proposals with legislators, playing an integral role in the passage and implementation of important health care legislation; and

WHEREAS, under Merle Painley's tenure, the Mental Health Association of Charlottesville-Albemarle, in cooperation with psychiatric health care providers, established a mental illness screening program for local residents and sponsored the first mental health and human rights conference held in the Charlottesville area; and

WHEREAS, dedicated to improving community awareness and providing quality psychiatric care for all residents, Merle Painley served on the advisory boards of both Western State Hospital and the former Charter Westbrook Hospital; and

WHEREAS, an advocate for improved mental health services, Merle Painley contributed her considerable knowledge and expertise as a member of the Western State Hospital and University of Virginia human rights committees, the state public policy committee, the juvenile justice reform committee, and as a delegate at-large of the State Association for Mental Health; and

WHEREAS, keenly aware of the importance of promoting accessible mental health care in the community, Merle Painley served as the vice chairman of the Mental Health Clubhouse, the coordinator of the local mental health coalition, and as a task force member to identify at-risk patients in the community; and

WHEREAS, the Mental Health Association of Charlottesville-Albemarle, under Merle Painley's guidance, initiated numerous counseling programs including Kids at Risk in Education (KARE) for children kindergarten through second grade with emotional and behavioral issues, a pro bono society to provide free attorney services to low income citizens, an eating disorder support group for middle school girls, two mental health self-help groups, and a telephone help line for mental health referrals; and

WHEREAS, Merle Painley was committed to promoting mental health, educating the public regarding the stigmas associated with mental illness, and improving the quality of life for all persons with mental illness throughout the Commonwealth; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly mourn the passing of an outstanding Virginian and citizen advocate, Merle Gruber Painley; 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 Merle Gruber Painley as an expression of the high regard in which her memory is held by the members of the General Assembly.

INTRODUCED

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