

2006 SPECIAL SESSION I

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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 5066

Offered May 25, 2006

Celebrating the life of A. Victor Thomas.

Patrons—Fralin, Ware, O., Abbitt, Albo, Alexander, Amundson, Armstrong, Athey, BaCote, Barlow, Bell, Bowling, Brink, Bulova, Byron, Callahan, Caputo, Carrico, Cline, Cole, Cosgrove, Cox, Crockett-Stark, Dance, Dudley, Ebbin, Eisenberg, Englin, Frederick, Gear, Gilbert, Griffith, Hall, Hamilton, Hargrove, Hogan, Howell, A.T., Howell, W.J., Hugo, Hull, Hurt, Iaquinto, Ingram, Janis, Joannou, Johnson, Jones, D.C., Jones, S.C., Kilgore, Landes, Lewis, Lingamfelter, Lohr, Marsden, Marshall, D.W., Marshall, R.G., May, McClellan, McEachin, McQuigg, Melvin, Miller, Moran, Morgan, Nixon, Nutter, O'Bannon, Oder, Orrock, Peace, Phillips, Plum, Poisson, Purkey, Putney, Rapp, Reid, Rust, Saxman, Scott, E.T., Scott, J.M., Shannon, Sherwood, Shuler, Sickles, Spruill, Suit, Tata, Toscano, Tyler, Valentine, Waddell, Ward, Wardrup, Ware, R.L., Watts, Welch, Wittman and Wright; Senators: Bell, Blevins, Chichester, Colgan, Cuccinelli, Deeds, Devolites Davis, Edwards, Hanger, Hawkins, Herring, Houck, Howell, Lambert, Locke, Lucas, Marsh, Martin, McDougale, Miller, Newman, Norment, Obenshain, O'Brien, Potts, Puckett, Puller, Quayle, Rerras, Reynolds, Ruff, Saslaw, Stolle, Stosch, Ticer, Wagner, Wampler, Watkins, Whipple, and Williams.

WHEREAS, A. Victor Thomas, respected and admired member of the House of Delegates for 30 years, died April 26, 2006; and

WHEREAS, the grandson of Lebanese immigrants, A. Victor "Vic" Thomas was born in Roanoke on November 9, 1929; and

WHEREAS, devoted to the Roanoke Valley community, Vic Thomas and his beloved wife, Dorothy, served the residents of the City of Roanoke at the family's E.J. Thomas Market on Orange Avenue for over 50 years; and

WHEREAS, the market was founded in 1924 by Vic Thomas' father, Ellis James Thomas; and during the flood of 1985, the family store was totally demolished by the waters of Tinker Creek just minutes after Vic Thomas and six others were rescued from the roof by helicopter; and

WHEREAS, the Thomases rebuilt the popular E.J. Thomas Market, which also doubled as a legislative office; because he was a good listener, a knowledgeable and dutiful lawmaker, and a caring man of the people, residents of Roanoke liked to visit with Vic Thomas and they were welcome at the store anytime; and

WHEREAS, Vic Thomas was first elected to the House of Delegates in 1973, representing the citizens of the 17th House District, comprised of Roanoke County and part of the City of Roanoke; and

WHEREAS, Vic Thomas served on the House Rules, Conservation and Natural Resources, Militia and Police, Privileges and Elections, and Appropriations Committees and patroned important legislation for the citizens of Roanoke and the Commonwealth; and

WHEREAS, well-known as a champion for people in need, Vic Thomas was an influential advocate for programs for residents with mental and physical disabilities and for services for senior citizens and the poor; and

WHEREAS, Vic Thomas believed in both the conservation of the Commonwealth's precious natural resources and protecting and preserving recreational opportunities for all Virginians who enjoy the outdoors; and

WHEREAS, Vic Thomas supported legislation that provided funding for the Department of Game and Inland Fisheries to benefit wildlife-related activities for hunters, anglers, and nature enthusiasts and worked tirelessly to advance the idea that the Constitution of Virginia should be amended to include the right to hunt and fish; and

WHEREAS, a committed community benefactor, Vic Thomas generously gave his time and immense talents to numerous civic organizations, including the Roanoke Valley Graduate Center and the Roanoke Higher Education Center, the Center in the Square and its museums, the Virginia Transportation Museum, the Mill Mountain Zoo, and the Roanoke Valley Greenways; and

WHEREAS, the House of Delegates' senior Democrat, Vic Thomas retired from the legislature effective January 13, 2004, after having served his constituents in the 17th District for 16 consecutive terms; and

WHEREAS, Vic Thomas will be fondly remembered for his gentle manner and great integrity and missed by his devoted wife, three sons and daughter, his four grandchildren and other beloved family members and friends; his colleagues on both sides of the aisle; and the citizens of the Commonwealth; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly mourn

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47 the passing of a fine statesman and outstanding Virginian, A. Victor Thomas; and, be it
48 RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution
49 for presentation to the family of A. Victor Thomas as an expression of the General Assembly's respect
50 for his memory.