

# 2006 SPECIAL SESSION I

INTRODUCED  
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## SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 5019

Offered April 26, 2006

*Commending Claudia Emerson.*

Patrons—Hawkins, Chichester, Houck and Puller; Delegates: Hurt and Marshall, D.W.

WHEREAS, Claudia Emerson, associate professor of English at the University of Mary Washington in Fredericksburg, is honored for her wondrous gifts as a poet and as the recipient of the 2006 Pulitzer Prize for Poetry for her acclaimed book, *Late Wife*, in which a woman profoundly explores her transition from one life to another; and

WHEREAS, the Pulitzer Prize, named after newspaper publisher Joseph Pulitzer, is an American award regarded as the highest honor in print journalism, literature, and musical composition and has been administered by Columbia University since 1917; the award honors books that address the abounding themes that characterize life and the human condition; and

WHEREAS, Claudia Emerson was born and raised in Chatham by her parents, Mollie and Claude L. Emerson; attended Chatham Hall, an Episcopal preparatory school; earned a bachelor's degree in English from the University of Virginia in 1979; and received a master of fine arts degree in poetry from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro in 1991; and

WHEREAS, before beginning her tenure at the University of Mary Washington (UMW), Claudia Emerson served as academic dean at Chatham Hall and taught at Washington and Lee University, Danville Community College, and Randolph-Macon Woman's College; and

WHEREAS, Claudia Emerson is the author of three notable poetry collections—her 2005 Pulitzer award-winning work, *Late Wife*; *Pinion*, *An Elegy*, written in 2002; and her first book of poems, *Pharaoh*, written in 1997; and

WHEREAS, Claudia Emerson's amazing poems have appeared in *Poetry*, *The Southern Review*, *The Georgia Review*, *TriQuarterly*, *The Louisville Review*, *New England Review*, *The Chattahoochee Review*, *Crazyhorse*, *Shenandoah*, *Blackbird*, *Five Points*, *Visions International*, *Ploughshares*, and many other literary journals and publications; and

WHEREAS, a committed teacher and mentor, Claudia Emerson writes her own poetry while teaching a poetry class at UMW and expects the same discipline and high quality work from her students that she demands from herself; and

WHEREAS, Claudia Emerson has received numerous accolades for her work, including the Associated Writing Program's Intro Award, the Academy of American Poets Prize, and the Mary Washington College Alumni Association's Outstanding Young Faculty Award; and

WHEREAS, Claudia Emerson has been honored with a National Endowment for the Arts Fellowship in Poetry in 1994, a Witter Bynner Fellowship in 2005, as well as a Virginia Commission for the Arts Individual Artist Fellowship in Poetry in 1995 and 2002; and

WHEREAS, a cherished Virginian with a sensitive and commanding poetic voice, Claudia Emerson is an inspiration to the citizens of the Commonwealth and the nation; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the General Assembly commend and congratulate Claudia Emerson as the winner of the distinguished 2006 Pulitzer Prize for Poetry award; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to Claudia Emerson as an expression of the General Assembly's great appreciation for her immense talent and for her love of and dedication to literature.

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