

2007 SESSION

ENROLLED

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 895

Celebrating the life of Electronics Technician Senior Chief Thomas K. Higgins.

Agreed to by the House of Delegates, February 16, 2007
Agreed to by the Senate, February 22, 2007

WHEREAS, United States Navy Electronics Technician Senior Chief Thomas K. Higgins, who lived in Chesapeake with his wife and family, was a respected member of Commander Submarine Group Two in Norfolk; and

WHEREAS, Senior Chief Higgins died tragically in the line of duty on December 29, 2006, after being washed overboard from the deck of the USS *Minneapolis-Saint Paul* in rough seas in Plymouth, England; and

WHEREAS, Senior Chief Higgins grew up in Mayfield, Kentucky, graduated from Mayfield High School in 1979 and worked in emergency services for a local trauma center until enlisting in the United States Navy in August of 1981; and

WHEREAS, Senior Chief Higgins attended Basic Enlisted Submarine School, and after completing pipeline training, reported for duty aboard the USS *Shark* in June of 1982 where he served for three years; and

WHEREAS, recruited for Chief Naval Officer Special Projects in 1985, Senior Chief Higgins transferred to Submarine Development Group ONE, Detachment Sierra, in Vallejo, California, serving on the USS *Parche*, USS *Finback*, and USS *Siversides* during his three-year tour; and

WHEREAS, in 1988 Senior Chief Higgins earned a master training specialist designation at the Trident Training Facility (TTF) in Bangor, Washington, was selected as the TTF Bangor Enlisted Instructor of the Year for two consecutive years, and was runner-up as Chief of Naval Technical Training Instructor of the Year out of 10,000 Navy instructors; and

WHEREAS, in 1992 Senior Chief Higgins was ordered to the USS *Frank Cable*, attained the rank of chief petty officer, and in 1994 served on his first submarine tour assigned to the USS *Billfish* as electronics material officer; and

WHEREAS, in 1996 Senior Chief Higgins was recruited by Submarine Development Squadron TWELVE for the position of electronics material officer under Captain Kirk Donald, where he was invaluable in the New London waterfront reorganization of the Submarine Squadron Support Unit; and

WHEREAS, in 1999 Senior Chief Higgins reported aboard the USS *Albuquerque*, completed two deployments, was twice selected as the ship's nominee for the Admiral Claude V. Ricketts Award for inspirational leadership, and was advanced to the rank of senior chief petty officer; and

WHEREAS, Senior Chief Higgins was recruited to serve on Commander Submarine Group TWO in October 2003 as assistant operations officer, where he played a significant role in the operational readiness of the group, and in 2005 he was selected for the assignment of USS *Minneapolis-Saint Paul's* chief of the boat, or "the COB," the title given to the most senior enlisted sailor who serves as a father figure to younger sailors; and

WHEREAS, during the course of his distinguished service, Senior Chief Higgins received six Navy and Marine Corps Commendation medals, four Navy and Marine Corps Achievement medals, six Navy Good Conduct medals, the Military Outstanding Volunteer Service medal, the Expert Rifle medal, the Expert Pistol medal, and various unit awards and citations; and

WHEREAS, the tremendous loss of Senior Chief Higgins is a reminder of the many perils our devoted men and women of the armed forces face every day in loyal service to their country; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly hereby mourn the death of a courageous sailor and patriotic Virginian, Electronics Technician Senior Chief Thomas K. Higgins; 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 Electronics Technician Senior Chief Thomas K. Higgins as an expression of the high regard in which his memory is held by the members of the General Assembly and the citizens of the Commonwealth.

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