

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 472

Celebrating the life of the Honorable Joseph T. Fitzpatrick.

Agreed to by the Senate, February 1, 2007
Agreed to by the House of Delegates, February 9, 2007

WHEREAS, Joseph T. Fitzpatrick, former member of the Senate of Virginia and a previous state Democratic chairman, died on July 12, 2006; and

WHEREAS, a native of Ocean View, Joseph Fitzpatrick was born on June 1, 1929, the son of Clarence Thomas and Alice Willis Fitzpatrick; and

WHEREAS, Joseph Fitzpatrick became interested in national politics in the 1960s, when he diligently worked as the local Norfolk precinct chairman during John F. Kennedy's presidential campaign, and he was later tapped to manage Robert F. Kennedy's presidential run in the southern states; and

WHEREAS, an enthusiastic supporter and believer in young people, Joseph Fitzpatrick volunteered for many years as the basketball coach at the Barry Robinson Home for Boys, served as the president of the Virginia Catholic High School League Coaches Association from 1959 to 1963, and was named 1962 Coach of the Year by the Virginia High School League for his many years of service to youth; and

WHEREAS, a fiery and compassionate advocate for all citizens in need, Joseph T. Fitzpatrick became actively involved in state politics when he became the leader of a renowned group of ambitious young men who vigorously campaigned for anti-Byrd candidates in local political races in the 1960s; and

WHEREAS, Joseph Fitzpatrick was a visionary leader and the admired state Democratic chairman during a period of great change in the 1970s, when the party supported more open and accessible government and embraced inclusiveness and a more multi-ethnic leadership; and

WHEREAS, well over six feet tall with black-rimmed glasses and thick silvery hair, Joseph Fitzpatrick possessed an awesome political presence, so much so that he was immortalized in Garrett Epps' 1977 novel, *The Shad Treatment*, as the memorable character, Knocko Cheatham, a relentless campaign manager of a liberal Virginia gubernatorial candidate; and

WHEREAS, a keen political strategist and knowledgeable lawmaker, Joseph Fitzpatrick served as a member of the Senate of Virginia from 1976 to 1981 and supported important legislation on behalf of the citizens of Hampton Roads and Virginia; and

WHEREAS, a longtime public servant and an able administrator on the local level, Joseph Fitzpatrick faithfully served for 20 years as the City of Norfolk's treasurer before retiring in 2001; and

WHEREAS, over a long and distinguished career, Joseph Fitzpatrick gave his time and considerable talents as the vice president of the Saint Mary's Cemetery Board and the president of the DePaul Advisory Board and was founding director of the Bank of Hampton Roads and the Bank of the Commonwealth; and

WHEREAS, Joseph Fitzpatrick was honored with many awards, including the Virginia Young Democrats' Outstanding Virginian Award, the Legislative Conservationist of the Year Award, the Virginia Treasurer's Association's 1990 Treasurer of the Year award, the 1995 Commonwealth Award, and the Virginia Association of Local Executive Officers' Distinguished Service Award and its Virginian Statesman Award, which was created in his honor; and

WHEREAS, Joseph T. Fitzpatrick will be fondly remembered for his tremendous loyalty to those he held dear and his invaluable role as mentor to countless associates and aspiring political figures; and

WHEREAS, Joseph T. Fitzpatrick will be sorely missed by his three devoted daughters, their spouses, six wonderful grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren; a multitude of other family members and friends; and the citizens of the City of Norfolk and the Commonwealth; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the General Assembly mourn the passing of an extraordinary public servant and outstanding Virginian, the Honorable Joseph T. Fitzpatrick; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the family of the Honorable Joseph T. Fitzpatrick as an expression of the General Assembly's respect for his memory.

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