

2008 SESSION

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SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 13

Offered January 9, 2008

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Celebrating the life of Sara Hamburg Tonelson.

Patron—Miller, Y.B.

WHEREAS, Sara Hamburg Tonelson of Norfolk, a respected citizen and outstanding educator in the Norfolk Public Schools and Old Dominion University for many years, died on April 8, 2007; and

WHEREAS, Sara Tonelson grew up in Norfolk and developed a strong work ethic and a love of people from all walks of life, working with her parents in the family's ship chandlery shop located at the city docks; and

WHEREAS, Sara Tonelson graduated from Maury High School and soon married her beloved husband of 61 years, the late A. Rufus Tonelson, who served as longtime principal at Maury High School and was also an Old Dominion University (ODU) alumnus and former education professor at the university; and

WHEREAS, Sara Tonelson was a stay-at-home mom, until one day, as she was dropping off a son at school, the principal convinced her to stay and substitute teach; and she enjoyed teaching so much she went back to school to further her education; and

WHEREAS, a devoted wife and mother and remarkable woman, Sara Tonelson earned a bachelors degree in 1966 and a masters degree in 1969 from ODU while raising her two sons, Louis and Stephen; and

WHEREAS, an exceptional and dedicated teacher, Sara Tonelson served for 15 years as a special education teacher and after her retirement from the Norfolk Public Schools continued her career as a supervisor of student teaching at ODU; and

WHEREAS, a gifted educator and mentor for young people, Sara Tonelson's philosophy was to "take a child from where he was to where he could be"; and

WHEREAS, Sara and Rufus Tonelson shared a great love for ODU athletics and together they were longtime benefactors of their alma mater, establishing the Tonelson Garden at Webb Center and an endowment for an annual faculty award in the Darden College of Education; and

WHEREAS, Sara Tonelson was a faithful member of Congregation Beth El of Norfolk and active in the synagogue's many organizations and activities in the community; and

WHEREAS, Sara Tonelson will be fondly remembered for her kind and generous nature and greatly missed by her loving family, including four wonderful grandchildren; her students and fellow teachers; and her numerous friends and admirers; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the General Assembly mourn the passing of a fine and outstanding Virginian, Sara Hamburg Tonelson; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the family of Sara Hamburg Tonelson as an expression of the General Assembly's respect for her memory.

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