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SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 238

Offered February 27, 2008

Commending Nolan T. Yelich.

Patrons—Norment; Delegates: Barlow, Hamilton and Pogge

WHEREAS, Nolan T. Yelich, an excellent ambassador for the Commonwealth and its admired Librarian of Virginia, retired on June 30, 2007, after 39 years of outstanding service; and

WHEREAS, a Wisconsin native, Nolan Yelich earned a bachelor's degree and a master's degree from the University of Wisconsin and completed an advanced graduate program in American studies at the University of Maryland; and

WHEREAS, in 1968, Nolan Yelich came to Virginia to serve as the director of public services for the Earl Gregg Swem Library at The College of William and Mary, and on June 1, 1973, he joined the staff of what is now the Library of Virginia; and

WHEREAS, during his tenure at the Library of Virginia, Nolan Yelich served as director of administrative services, deputy director, and twice as acting state librarian; and

WHEREAS, in 1995, Nolan Yelich was appointed state librarian by Governor George Allen, and he continued at the post in 1996 when appointment authority was transferred to the library board; he became the first Librarian of Virginia when the General Assembly enacted legislation to create the position and official title for the state librarian in 1998; and

WHEREAS, under Nolan Yelich's guidance, the Commonwealth's treasured and world-renowned archival and printed collections at the Library of Virginia have continued to flourish and expand; and

WHEREAS, building an exemplary state library system emulated by states across the nation, Nolan Yelich oversaw the construction of the \$43 million library building at 800 East Broad Street in Richmond and its grand opening to the public in 1997, as well as the development of the \$8 million State Records Center in Henrico County that opened in 1999; and

WHEREAS, an exceptional administrator and visionary leader, Nolan Yelich was instrumental in the expansion of the Library of Virginia's exhibition and educational outreach programs and was a great supporter of the annual Literary Awards Celebration, a literary awards competition honoring authors and books about Virginia in the areas of fiction, nonfiction, and poetry; and

WHEREAS, Nolan Yelich was the guiding force in the Library of Virginia's development into an internationally recognized research library; and

WHEREAS, receiving many accolades over the years, Nolan Yelich and the library board were honored with the 2002 Virginia Coalition for Open Government's Freedom of Information Award for ensuring public access to executive documents of former Governor Gilmore's administration, and he was awarded the American Library Association's 2004 John Phillip Immroth Memorial Award for Intellectual Freedom for demonstrating remarkable personal courage in resisting censorship, as well as the 2006 Centennial Award from his alma mater, the University of Wisconsin, for outstanding leadership in the library and information profession; and

WHEREAS, Nolan Yelich has given his time and remarkable talents to many civic and professional organizations, serving as president of the Virginia Library Association and the Virginia School Boards Association, chairman of the Williamsburg/James City County School Board and the Public Library Association's White House Conference Planning Committee, member of the American Library Association and the National School Board Association delegations to China, and board member of the Art Museum of Western Virginia; and

WHEREAS, Nolan Yelich served as a member of the Freedom of Information Advisory Council from its founding in 2000 until his retirement in 2007; and

WHEREAS, admired and respected by his talented staff, his colleagues across the state and the nation, and the citizens of Virginia, Nolan Yelich has been a tireless advocate for the Library of Virginia and an excellent ambassador of the Commonwealth; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the General Assembly commend Nolan T. Yelich on his dedicated public service and commitment to excellence as Librarian of Virginia; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to Nolan T. Yelich as an expression of the General Assembly's gratitude for his many achievements and best wishes for a happy and rewarding retirement.

INTRODUCED

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