

2008 SPECIAL SESSION II

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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 6018

Offered June 23, 2008

Celebrating the life of Chief Special Warfare Operator (SEAL) Lance M. Vaccaro.

Patron—Suit

WHEREAS, United States Navy Chief Special Warfare Operator (SEAL) Lance M. Vaccaro, age 35, a 17-year veteran, died in the service of his country on March 6, 2008, while conducting parachute training operations near Marana, Arizona; and

WHEREAS, born in Reading, Pennsylvania, Chief Special Warfare Operator Vaccaro resided and was stationed in Virginia Beach and had been assigned to a SEAL team based at the Naval Special Warfare Development Group at the Dam Neck Annex since June 1997; and

WHEREAS, Chief Special Warfare Operator Vaccaro enlisted in the United States Navy in 1991 and graduated from boot camp at Recruit Training Command, Great Lakes, Illinois; and

WHEREAS, Chief Special Warfare Operator Vaccaro began his first tour of duty aboard USS *George Washington* (CVN 73) in Norfolk, transferred to USS *Kitty Hawk* (CV 63) in Yokosuka, Japan, before entering Basic Underwater Demolition/SEAL (BUD/S) training in Coronado, California, in 1996; and

WHEREAS, Chief Special Warfare Operator Vaccaro completed advanced training courses and served in various East Coast-based SEAL teams during his exemplary career; and

WHEREAS, among his many military honors, Chief Special Warfare Operator Vaccaro received the Defense Meritorious Service Medal, four Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medals, three Joint Service Commendation Medals, including one with Valor, Navy and Marine Corps and Army Commendation Medals, Joint Service Achievement Medal, two Combat Action Ribbons, Presidential Unit Citation, Navy Unit Commendation, Navy "E" Ribbon, Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal, Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, NATO Medal, and the National Defense Service Medal, as well as campaign medals for his brave service in Kosovo, Afghanistan, and Iraq; and

WHEREAS, Chief Special Warfare Operator Vaccaro was devoted to his family and friends, especially his loving companion Becky Whitbeck and her family; and

WHEREAS, the Navy SEALs are among the world's toughest fighters, and the members of this elite unit, trained and deployed for the most dangerous of situations, form unusually tight bonds; and

WHEREAS, Chief Special Warfare Operator Vaccaro belonged to this select group, whose members honor the fallen warriors with the words: "The path to glory is rough, and many gloomy hours obscure it. . . may the great spirit shed light on your path—Black Hawk"; and

WHEREAS, the death of Chief Special Warfare Operator Vaccaro is a reminder of the perils faced daily by the thousands of Americans who serve in our armed forces at home and overseas and whose devotion to duty places them in harm's way; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly hereby note with great sadness the loss of a courageous and patriotic Virginian, Chief Special Warfare Operator (SEAL) Lance M. Vaccaro; 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 Chief Special Warfare Operator (SEAL) Lance M. Vaccaro as an expression of the high regard in which his memory is held by the members of the General Assembly and the citizens of Virginia.

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