

096766284

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 426

Offered February 9, 2009

Celebrating the life of William Jennings Hargis, Jr.

Patrons—Norment and Northam; Delegate: Morgan

WHEREAS, William Jennings Hargis, Jr., of Gloucester Point, a marine scientist and pioneering environmentalist in the Commonwealth, especially in his preservation and study of the Chesapeake Bay, died on October 17, 2008; and

WHEREAS, William Hargis, Jr., was born in Russell County on November 24, 1923, the son of William, Sr., and Addie Corbett Hargis; earned bachelor's and master's degrees from the University of Richmond; received a doctoral degree from Florida State University; and served his country in the Army Air Corps during World War II in the Pacific theater; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Hargis was the director of the Virginia Institute of Marine Science (VIMS) in Gloucester Point from its founding in 1962 until 1981, as well as the director of the Virginia Fisheries Laboratory, the predecessor of VIMS, from 1959 to 1961; and

WHEREAS, during his tenure, VIMS grew into the nation's largest research and education facilities of coastal ocean and estuarine science; and

WHEREAS, one of Dr. Hargis' most notable accomplishments was to elevate VIMS' role as a leading advisory service in which it assisted the Virginia Fisheries Commission, the State Water Control Board, the Virginia Department of Health, the General Assembly, and industry regarding marine resources and coastal-zone issues; VIMS soon received international recognition advising the United States State Department in fisheries negotiations with the Soviet Union, Poland, and international treaty organizations; and

WHEREAS, over the course of a distinguished 50-year career, Dr. Hargis wrote or reviewed nearly 700 publications, essays, congressional testimony statements, reports, scientific documents, and educational pieces on marine science, the environment, and resource management; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Hargis felt that science education was essential to the economic growth and prosperity of the Commonwealth; and he helped establish master's and doctoral programs in marine science and fostered VIMS' relationship with The College of William and Mary; and

WHEREAS, in the early 1970s, Dr. Hargis was a champion of coastal and estuarine studies and his contributions led to the National Sea Grant program and his appointment as first chair of the Coastal States Organization; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Hargis served the nation and Virginia in many capacities, including as vice-chair of the President's National Advisory Committee on Oceans and Atmosphere; as a member of the Governor's Virginia Economic Development Task Force, Coastal Plains Commission, and Mid-Atlantic Biological Task Force; and as a consultant to the National Council on Marine Resources; and

WHEREAS, over the years, Dr. Hargis received numerous awards, including the 1971 Neptune Award from the American Oceanic Organization; the 1997 Mathias Medal for Contributions to Marine Science for Policy and Education; the 2003 Thomas Jefferson Medal for Outstanding Contributions to Natural Science; and the 2003 Virginia Life Achievement in Science Award; in April 2004, the library at VIMS was named the William Jennings Hargis, Jr., Library in his honor; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Hargis will be fondly remembered for his deep love for his family, his nation, Virginia, and the Chesapeake Bay, as well as for his zest for life, including his enjoyment of sailing, reading, antiques, model trains, and many other pursuits; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Hargis will be greatly missed by his beloved wife, Marcia McKenzie Hargis; his six children, Laura, John, Susan, Emily, Ronald, and Patrick and their wonderful families, including his 15 grandchildren; his many other loving family members and friends; his colleagues and students; and the citizens of the Commonwealth; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the General Assembly note with great sadness the passing of an eminent environmentalist and outstanding Virginian, William Jennings Hargis, Jr.; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the family of William Jennings Hargis, Jr., as an expression of the General Assembly's respect for his memory.

INTRODUCED

SJ426