HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 278

Celebrating the life of William McGarvey Dudley.

Agreed to by the House of Delegates, February 19, 2010
Agreed to by the Senate, February 25, 2010

WHEREAS, William McGarvey Dudley, a beloved football legend and former member of the House of Delegates, died on February 4, 2010; and

WHEREAS, William Dudley was born to loving parents James Shelby Dudley, Sr., and Jewel Jarrett Dudley and was one of four siblings; he grew up in Bluefield and was a star football player at Graham High School; and

WHEREAS, William Dudley accepted a scholarship to the University of Virginia in 1938, where he quickly became known as a versatile and talented running back and tackler; by his senior season he led the nation in total yards and scoring, won the Maxwell Award, and was fifth in the Heisman Trophy voting; and

WHEREAS, drafted by the Pittsburgh Steelers in 1942, William "Bullet Bill" Dudley led the league in rushing in his first season, was rookie of the year, and was the league MVP in 1946; and

WHEREAS, William Dudley interrupted his football career to proudly serve his country during World War II as a United States Army Air Corp fighter pilot instructor; he also played on the U.S. Armed Forces All Star Team; and

WHEREAS, after the war, William Dudley continued his award-winning career for the Pittsburgh Steelers before also playing for the Detroit Lions and Washington Redskins; he was later inducted into the Virginia Sports Hall of Fame, the College Football Hall of Fame, and the Pro Football Hall of Fame; and

WHEREAS, in 1947 William Dudley married the love of his life, the former Elizabeth Leininger; together they raised a wonderful family of four children, Elizabeth, Rebecca, James, and the late Bill; and

WHEREAS, after his football career, William Dudley devoted himself to his life insurance business based in Lynchburg; he was recognized as a Life Member of the Million Dollar Round Table, a leading producer for the Equitable, and a respected AXA adviser and estate planner; and

WHEREAS, desiring to make a difference in the Commonwealth, William Dudley became involved in state politics and served in the House of Delegates from 1966 to 1974, representing the City of Lynchburg and the Counties of Amherst, Nelson, and Albemarle; and

WHEREAS, a dedicated and resourceful public servant, Delegate Dudley served on the Corporations, Insurance, and Banking; Education; Finance; and Labor Committees and worked diligently to enact important legislation for the citizens of the Commonwealth; and

WHEREAS, William Dudley generously gave of his time and talents in the community as a member of the boards of multiple philanthropic and charitable organizations, including the American Cancer Society, the American Heart Association, and the Red Cross; he also served on the board of the University of Virginia and Liberty University; and

WHEREAS, William Dudley continued his affiliation with the National Football League (NFL) as the first president of the NFL Alumni Association; he worked with the Alumni Association and the NFL to create the Dire Need Charitable Trust Fund for former NFL players and coaching staff; and

WHEREAS, a gifted athlete, dedicated businessman, and admired public servant, William Dudley brought great passion and enthusiasm to all his endeavors; and

WHEREAS, William Dudley will be fondly remembered and greatly missed by his loving wife of 63 years, Elizabeth; their surviving children, Elizabeth Jarrett Millard, Rebecca Lawrence Stinson, and James Forest Dudley and their families; his colleagues on both sides of the aisle; and the citizens of the Commonwealth; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly mourn the loss of an admired former member, William McGarvey Dudley; 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 William McGarvey Dudley as an expression of the General Assembly's respect for his memory.