

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 310

Commending Dana B. Hamel.

Agreed to by the House of Delegates, February 22, 2010
 Agreed to by the Senate, February 22, 2010

WHEREAS, Dana Hamel is commended for his unselfish devotion and brilliant leadership as the founding chancellor of the Virginia Community College System; and

WHEREAS, in 1965 Virginia's newly elected governor, Mills E. Godwin, Jr., learned at the annual meeting of the Southern Regional Education Board that Virginia ranked next-to-last among all the Southern states in the percentage of its college-age population actually enrolled in higher education; and

WHEREAS, the General Assembly reacted enthusiastically to the Governor's call for the establishment of a statewide system of two-year, comprehensive community colleges to provide both technical and college-transfer programs at campuses within commuting distance of virtually every Virginian; and

WHEREAS, to work with a board of prominent Virginians, the Governor appointed a young educator then in the process of organizing a statewide system of technical colleges like one he had developed in Roanoke for Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Dana B. Hamel accepted the challenge of bringing a much broader concept of education to Virginians—one that would offer previously unrealized opportunities to a broad segment of the state's population eager to participate in Virginia's expanding economic promise; and

WHEREAS, devoting himself unstintingly to the task, Dr. Hamel organized local boards and sought the counsel of local officials, educators, and business people in designing curricula appropriate to each region; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Hamel paved the way towards approval by the appropriate accrediting organizations and attracted some of the finest presidents, faculty, staff, and support groups in the nation to join him in making these opportunities a reality; and

WHEREAS, with coworkers as avid as he for the "System" to become fully operative, Dr. Hamel brought online the planned 23 colleges within the following seven years; eight were in newly constructed facilities while the others were located in facilities that earlier had served as vocational-technical schools, technical colleges, or branches of senior institutions; and

WHEREAS, Virginia's Community College System has 40 campuses across the Commonwealth from the Eastern Shore to Big Stone Gap; and

WHEREAS, today Virginians see the results of inspired leadership by a true visionary—one whose boundless enthusiasm and commitment continue to shed blessings on Virginia; and

WHEREAS, though perhaps few of the beneficiaries of Dr. Hamel's labors know his name, they and their communities—indeed this entire state—owe much to this exemplary public servant; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly commend the founding father of the Virginia Community College System, Dana B. Hamel; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to Dana B. Hamel as an expression of the General Assembly's gratitude and admiration for his work on behalf of the citizens of the Commonwealth.

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