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SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 126

Offered January 21, 2010

Celebrating the life of Robert Henkel Spilman, Sr.

Patrons—Wampler and Hurt; Delegate: Armstrong

WHEREAS, Robert Henkel Spilman, Sr., the retired president, chairman, and chief executive officer of Bassett Furniture Industries, died on November 15, 2009; and

WHEREAS, Robert "Bob" Spilman was born in Knoxville, Tennessee, and graduated from Augusta Military Academy; he served briefly in World War II in the United States Army Infantry Division; and

WHEREAS, Bob Spilman attended Davidson College and graduated from North Carolina State University before serving as an officer in the 82nd Airborne during the Korean conflict and then as an instructor at the United States Military Academy at West Point; and

WHEREAS, Bob Spilman spent 40 years at Bassett Furniture Industries; he began in 1957 as a table division sales manager, then became president in 1966, chief executive officer in 1979, and chairman in 1982; and

WHEREAS, a fair but tough competitor, Bob Spilman led Bassett Furniture Industries to a dominant position in the furniture industry with a focus on cost control and commitment to excellence; and

WHEREAS, Bob Spilman received many awards and accolades during his four decades with Bassett Furniture Industries, including the Wall Street Transcript No. 1 CEO Award of Furniture Industry, which he won three times; the James T. Ryan Statesman of Commerce Award, the American furniture industry's highest honor; and Virginia's Outstanding Industrialist in 1989; and

WHEREAS, Bob Spilman served as president of the Southern Furniture Manufacturers Association and after decades of outstanding leadership in the furniture industry, was inducted into the Furniture Hall of Fame in 2005; and

WHEREAS, recognized for his business acumen and leadership ability, Bob Spilman served on the boards and boards of trustees of numerous corporations and educational institutions throughout his long and exemplary career; and

WHEREAS, Bob Spilman also served as chairman of the Virginia Port Authority; on the Virginia-Israel Commission under Governor Baliles; and on Virginia's Economic Advisory Council under Governors Baliles and Robb; and

WHEREAS, Bob Spilman enjoyed golf, fishing, and gin rummy with his friends and family; he was the two-time Masters Billfishing Tournament champion for the Sailfish Club in Palm Beach, Florida; and

WHEREAS, a devoted and loving family man, Bob Spilman will be sorely missed by his wife of 54 years, Jane Bassett Spilman; their children Robert, Virginia, and Vance and their families; and his numerous friends and admirers; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the General Assembly note with great sadness the loss of an outstanding businessman and community servant, Robert H. Spilman, Sr.; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the family of Robert H. Spilman, Sr., as an expression of the General Assembly's respect for his memory.

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