

2011 SESSION

ENROLLED

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 706

Celebrating the life of Donna Rose Feldman Bergheim.

Agreed to by the House of Delegates, January 21, 2011

Agreed to by the Senate, January 27, 2011

WHEREAS, Donna Rose Feldman Bergheim of Alexandria, who enjoyed an enviable life of accomplishment and service as a Foreign Service Officer, professor, and admired advocate for the arts, died on March 27, 2010; and

WHEREAS, a native of Indiana, Donna Bergheim grew up in Tucson, Arizona, and received a bachelor's and master's degree from the University of Arizona before receiving a doctorate in speech and drama from the University of Iowa; and

WHEREAS, while completing her graduate studies, Donna Bergheim moved to Washington, D.C., and worked with the United States Information Agency's motion-picture service; and

WHEREAS, after completing her education, Dr. Bergheim served as a Foreign Service Officer in Japan and Burma, where she helped arrange appearances by notable individuals and groups, including Benny Goodman's jazz band and acclaimed novelist William Faulkner; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Bergheim then returned to Washington, D.C., for a brief time and worked for Voice of America before serving abroad as an assistant cultural attache at the United States Embassy in Mexico City; and

WHEREAS, in 1959 Dr. Bergheim married the love of her life, Mel, who would later serve as vice mayor of Alexandria; as married women could not hold professional positions in the Foreign Service at the time, she resigned to raise her family and pursue other professional opportunities; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Bergheim's local involvement with the arts began soon after her marriage when she volunteered with various arts groups and served on the board of directors of MetroStage, where she helped convert an old lumber warehouse into the 150-seat theater that patrons enjoy today; and

WHEREAS, after raising her four children while actively involved in school and civic affairs, Dr. Bergheim enjoyed a distinguished academic career, teaching at Southeastern University before becoming head of the University's department of communication arts and humanities and director of its preparatory college; and

WHEREAS, in 1993 Governor L. Douglas Wilder named Dr. Bergheim to a five-year term as a member of the Virginia Commission for the Arts, where she evaluated arts programs and helped award grants to organizations throughout the state; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Bergheim received numerous awards and accolades for her exemplary service, including an award from the Alexandria Commission for Women and recognition, along with her husband, as "Living Legends of Alexandria"; and

WHEREAS, recognizing the importance of the arts to community and individual life, Dr. Bergheim worked diligently on the local, state, and international level to create opportunities for individuals to enhance their lives by enjoying the arts; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Bergheim will be fondly remembered and greatly missed by her husband of 50 years, Mel; children, Beth, Laura, Maria, and David and their wonderful families; and numerous other family members, friends, and admirers; 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 an admired and respected Virginian, Donna Rose Feldman Bergheim; 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 Donna Rose Feldman Bergheim as an expression of the General Assembly's respect for her memory and many accomplishments.

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