

## 2011 SESSION

ENROLLED

### HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 912

*Commending William and Philomena O'Connell.*

Agreed to by the House of Delegates, February 18, 2011

Agreed to by the Senate, February 24, 2011

WHEREAS, William and Philomena O'Connell have enjoyed 60 glorious years of marriage while raising three daughters and serving the nation and local community; and

WHEREAS, with only one year's age difference, William "Bill" O'Connell and Philomena "Phil" Ridgway both grew up in the same small town in Kansas during the Depression; and

WHEREAS, sharing an Irish Catholic upbringing, Bill O'Connell and Phil Ridgway attended the same Catholic school, though they didn't begin to date until Bill O'Connell was in the United States Navy and Phil Ridgway was away at college; and

WHEREAS, after a romantic courtship, the young couple married at the same Catholic church they had attended since birth, before spending their honeymoon driving to Bill O'Connell's first post in California; and

WHEREAS, Bill O'Connell began his exemplary career with the United States Navy as a fighter pilot, starting as a flying midshipman during the Korean War and later becoming a squadron commander and operations officer on aircraft carriers in the Vietnam War; and

WHEREAS, one of the United States Navy's top pilots, Bill O'Connell flew with the Navy Fighter Weapons School (TOPGUN) and the Blue Angels, and later shared his expertise with other officers as a faculty member of the United States Naval War College, the United States Army War College, and the Industrial College of the Armed Forces; and

WHEREAS, after 34 years of meritorious service, Bill O'Connell retired from the United States Navy and shared his wisdom and insight with a new generation of strategic planners and the defense support industry; and

WHEREAS, after college, Phil O'Connell began her career as a teacher and has educated others throughout her life as an engaged citizen, caring neighbor, and devoted parish volunteer and organizer; and

WHEREAS, a gracious and charming lady, Phil O'Connell provided companionship and organized entertainment to help other spouses and families deal with the stress of extended absences of service members during periods of war; and

WHEREAS, Bill and Phil O'Connell have been residents of the Commonwealth for the past 38 years, developing and sharing their appreciation of its Colonial and Early American heritage with others; and

WHEREAS, over the years, Bill and Phil O'Connell have raised three daughters and served the community, Commonwealth, and nation with great distinction while creating a wonderful life for themselves based on mutual love and respect; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly commend William and Philomena O'Connell for their service to the Commonwealth and country on the occasion of their 60th wedding anniversary; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to William and Philomena O'Connell as an expression of the General Assembly's congratulations on their many happy years together.

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