

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 469

Commending Fran Rooker.

Agreed to by the Senate, February 17, 2011
Agreed to by the House of Delegates, February 22, 2011

WHEREAS, Fran Rooker of Roanoke was honored with a prestigious 2010 Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Community Health Leaders Award for her extraordinary efforts to help individuals and families dealing with the effects of brain injuries; and

WHEREAS, the Community Health Leaders Award, established in 1993 and given annually to 10 individuals across the nation, recognizes those who have courageously worked to overcome obstacles and improve health and health care in their communities; and

WHEREAS, Fran Rooker's incredible journey began when her 10-year-old son, Jason, suffered an accident that deprived him of oxygen for 10 minutes, leaving him a quadriplegic; before his death one year later, she discovered that there were no services to help her and her family deal with a traumatic brain injury in their rural community; and

WHEREAS, after Jason's death, Fran and her husband, a former community newspaper owner and publisher, decided to help other individuals and families in their area who were living with brain injuries by creating the Jason Foundation to provide resources and education; and

WHEREAS, Fran Rooker researched other programs that dealt with brain injuries and connected with Brain Injury Services, Inc., in Northern Virginia, which mentored her and her husband in establishing a similar organization in the Roanoke Valley region—Brain Injury Services of Southwest Virginia; and

WHEREAS, Fran Rooker has also collaborated with specialists from the Virginia Tech Department of Assistive Technology, Radford University, and Brain Injury Services of Southwest Virginia to create an innovative telehealth pilot project that will enable brain injury survivors in remote areas to receive rehabilitative resources and connect with their peers online; and

WHEREAS, one of only three Virginians to have won the prestigious Community Health Leaders Award since the program's inception, Fran Rooker received \$105,000 and technical assistance to support her work along with the opportunity to attend conferences and meetings with peers; and

WHEREAS, a woman of inspirational courage and determination, Fran Rooker created a living legacy in memory of her beloved son, Jason, by transforming health care for those with traumatic brain injuries in Southwest Virginia; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the General Assembly commend Fran Rooker as a 2010 Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Community Health Leaders Award recipient; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to Fran Rooker as an expression of the General Assembly's congratulations and gratitude for her remarkable efforts that have changed the quality of health care in Southwest Virginia.