

2012 SESSION

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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 193

Offered January 17, 2012

Celebrating the life of Mary Lou Decossaux.

Patrons— McQuinn, McClellan, Carr, Herring, Loupassi, and Morrissey

WHEREAS, Mary Lou Decossaux, the founder of the Neighborhood Resource Center in Richmond's historic Fulton Hill neighborhood and beloved community advocate, died on December 27, 2011; and

WHEREAS, a native of Florida, Mary Lou Decossaux grew up in New Jersey and earned a bachelor's degree from Long Island University; she then earned a master's degree from the School for Advanced Studies in the Social Sciences in Paris, remaining in the City of Light for several years after the completion of her degree; and

WHEREAS, upon returning to the United States, Mary Lou Decossaux settled in Richmond's Fulton Hill neighborhood and worked for Henrico and Hanover Counties, the Virginia Department of Education, and the William Byrd Community House; and

WHEREAS, known as "the Living Wage Lady," Mary Lou Decossaux was the founding organizer of the Richmond Coalition for a Living Wage and worked with local government officials to ensure that city and school direct employees earn a living wage; and

WHEREAS, committed to her neighbors, Mary Lou Decossaux helped form the Fulton Hill Community Business Association and joined with other community leaders, local artists, and volunteers to establish a community gathering place for Fulton Hill residents, the Neighborhood Resource Center; and

WHEREAS, the Neighborhood Resource Center offers classes on computer instruction and General Equivalency Diploma courses; a wide array of preschool, afterschool, and adult classes to help individuals reach their personal goals; and a cafe and garden; and

WHEREAS, appointed to the City of Richmond's Anti-Poverty Commission, Mary Lou Decossaux provided thoughtful insight and a strong voice on behalf of those in need; and

WHEREAS, Mary Lou Decossaux was honored for her extraordinary contributions to her community with a Stettinius Award for Nonprofit Leadership from the Community Foundation and a Richmond History Makers Award from the Valentine Richmond History Center; and

WHEREAS, an amazing woman, Mary Lou Decossaux valued every individual and realized that neighbors, government officials, and friends and family working together could accomplish remarkable things; and

WHEREAS, Mary Lou Decossaux will be greatly missed by her family, friends, and those whose lives she touched with her determined and caring spirit; 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 a beloved member of the Fulton Hill community, Mary Lou Decossaux; 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 Mary Lou Decossaux as an expression of the General Assembly's respect for her memory.

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