HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 198

Commending Alan G. Merten.

Agreed to by the House of Delegates, January 20, 2012
Agreed to by the Senate, January 24, 2012

WHEREAS, Alan G. Merten, the visionary president of George Mason University who has led the school as it experienced extraordinary growth and gained national and international acclaim for its innovative teaching and research programs, will retire in June of 2012; and

WHEREAS, Alan Merten received a bachelor's degree from the University of Wisconsin, master's degree from Stanford University, and doctorate from the University of Wisconsin before embarking on a career in higher education as a professor and administrator; and

WHEREAS, after serving as dean of the Samuel Curtis Johnson Graduate School of Management at Cornell University, Alan Merten became president of George Mason University in 1996 and launched an ambitious program to build the school into a major teaching and research university; and

WHEREAS, under Alan Merten's leadership, the number of students attending George Mason University has increased, with the average GPA among incoming freshmen rising to 3.6 and the school's position climbing on the prestigious *U.S. News & World Report* ranking; and

WHEREAS, the increased number of students and programs during Alan Merten's tenure has necessitated the construction of additional facilities, including dormitories, that have helped to create more of a sense of campus community; and

WHEREAS, recognizing that the Washington metropolitan area has unique resources, Alan Merten has worked alongside local technology entrepreneurs and business leaders to create innovative programs that meet area workforce needs; and

WHEREAS, Alan Merten aggressively promoted the expansion of research, resulting in an increase in research funding from $28 million to $130 million; and

WHEREAS, a powerhouse for economic research, George Mason University is the only institution of higher education in the Commonwealth that has two faculty members who have received the Nobel Prize in Economic Sciences; and

WHEREAS, the creation of a Performing Arts Center under Alan Merten's leadership has provided a much needed venue for cultural arts programming not only for George Mason University students but the local community as well; and

WHEREAS, while Alan Merten was president, George Mason University became the first university to host the World Congress on Information Technology, attracting thousands of high-profile representatives of industry, government, and academia to the Northern Virginia area; and

WHEREAS, Alan Merten encouraged the formation of George Mason University's first capital campaign that provided much needed resources to aid in the school's mission and also oversaw a doubling of the university's annual fundraising in the past five years; and

WHEREAS, in Alan Merten's 10th year as president, George Mason University gained national exposure and electrified students and alumni alike when the men's basketball team earned a coveted spot in the National Collegiate Athletic Association's Final Four in 2006; and

WHEREAS, Alan G. Merten has devoted countless hours over the course of his 16-year career at George Mason University to molding an institution of higher education for the Commonwealth that attracts the best students who receive a quality education that enables them to pursue careers in the public and private sector; and

WHEREAS, Alan G. Merten has profoundly influenced the quality of higher education in the Commonwealth by transforming George Mason University into a major teaching and research school while making numerous contributions to the technology, business, and cultural communities of the Washington metropolitan area; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commend Alan G. Merten on the occasion of his retirement as president of George Mason University; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to Alan G. Merten as an expression of the General Assembly's admiration and gratitude for his outstanding leadership of one of the Commonwealth's great universities.