

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 938

Celebrating the life of Charles Taft Peters, Jr.

Agreed to by the House of Delegates, February 21, 2013
Agreed to by the Senate, February 22, 2013

WHEREAS, Charles Taft Peters, Jr., was born on June 6, 1942, in Palm Beach, Florida, adopted Richmond as his home in 1967, and died unexpectedly on January 29, 2013, in Duck Key, Florida; and

WHEREAS, Charles Taft Peters, Jr., spent his childhood and early years in Toledo, Ohio, then Delaware, Ohio, before graduating in 1967 from the School of Architecture at the University of Virginia with a degree in urban planning; and

WHEREAS, after graduation from the University of Virginia, Charles Taft Peters, Jr., relocated to Richmond to accept a position as city planner to assist small communities around the state in implementing plans for growth and development; and

WHEREAS, Charles Taft Peters, Jr., graduated from the University of Virginia's Frank Batten Graduate School of Leadership and Public Policy and became a senior planner for the City of Richmond in 1972; he continued his ascent in city government and later became Chief of the Program Planning Bureau, and then Director of the Department of Planning and Community Development in 1979, supervising and championing the city's development and advancement from 1981 until his retirement in 1997; and

WHEREAS, Charles Taft Peters, Jr., was a dedicated Richmond community leader, advocate, and fervent volunteer who worked for civic betterment; he helped found the Richmond Better Housing Coalition, chaired the Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority, served as a trustee for Historic Richmond Foundation, served as chairman of the board and interim executive director for City Celebrations, served on the board of the Public Art Commission, and as a former president of the Fan District Association; and

WHEREAS, Charles Taft Peters, Jr., was actively involved in the community, working rigorously at the grass roots level to facilitate change in the community, particularly in the areas of early childhood development, equal housing opportunities, historic preservation, and protection of the James River; he served as a member of numerous organizations and on many boards, among them, the advisory board of the Visual Arts Center, the Storefront for Community Design Executive Committee, the Housing Stability Action Council, the United Way of Greater Richmond, the Richmond CenterStage Foundation, and as Director of the Virginia Commonwealth University Real Estate Foundation, and at the time of his death he was vice president of the board of the Council for America's First Freedom and a member of the board of the Falls of the James Scenic River Advisory Committee; and

WHEREAS, Charles Taft Peters, Jr., together with his wife, completed a two-year appointment as executive directors of FRIENDS Association for Children; vice chairman of the board of directors of the Medarva Foundation, and an active member of Richmond BMW Riders and Fly Fishers of Virginia; and

WHEREAS, before his retirement in 1997, Charles Taft Peters, Jr., left indelible marks throughout the City of Richmond, having crafted some of the city's major initiatives, including the Virginia BioTechnology Research Park; restoration of the city canal system; the Bosher's Dam project that installed fish ladders to restore migration upstream for fish to spawn; designation of the James River as one of the nation's first 10 Heritage Rivers; a \$52 million riverfront initiative and creation of a turning basin at 14th Street; a riverwalk and combined sewer overflow pipeline to promote commercial and residential development; the Project One downtown rehabilitation effort that brought the Richmond Marriott and the Greater Richmond Convention Center, an Omni Hotel, a floodwall, the rehabilitation of the Jefferson Hotel, Tobacco Row apartments, and more parking to the city; and the 6th Street Marketplace; and

WHEREAS, Charles Taft Peters, Jr., loved to hop on one of his three motorcycles to be alone with his thoughts after a stressful day in the office; he took trips with the Richmond BMW Riders, rode cross-country to the West Coast many times, and had banked 150,000 miles since he started riding BMW motorcycles 25 years ago; at the time of his death he was working on his next 50,000-mile pin; and

WHEREAS, Charles Taft Peters, Jr., was the consummate fly fisherman and his passion for the sport led him to travel with fishing groups to streams in Alaska, in Montana, and in the mountains of western Virginia; and

WHEREAS, Charles Taft Peters, Jr., has been described by those who loved and knew him as "passionate about Richmond, and happiest knee deep in a trout stream or on a motorcycle with the wind in his beard"; and

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WHEREAS, the memory of Charles Taft Peters, Jr., will be forever cherished by his family, friends, and colleagues; 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 Charles Taft Peters, Jr.; 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 Charles Taft Peters, Jr., as an expression of the General Assembly's respect for his memory and for his service to the citizens of Richmond.