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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 126

Offered January 10, 2014

Celebrating the life of Rear Admiral Raynor A. K. Taylor, USN (Ret.).

Patrons—Stolle, Davis, DeSteph, Knight and Taylor; Senator: Wagner

WHEREAS, Rear Admiral Raynor A. K. Taylor, USN (Ret.), a man who redefined community involvement in Hampton Roads, died on September 3, 2013; and

WHEREAS, born in New Bedford, Massachusetts, on December 22, 1935, Raynor "Ray" Taylor excelled in math, physics, and geography at New Bedford High School and later attended Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute (RPI) on an academic scholarship for two years; and

WHEREAS, after completing two years at RPI, Ray Taylor earned a competitive Congressional appointment to the United States Naval Academy, where he served as editor of the *Lucky Bag* yearbook and graduated as a member of the class of 1960; and

WHEREAS, together with his devoted wife, Mary Jane, Ray Taylor enjoyed a distinguished 33-year Navy career and achieved the rank of Rear Admiral; and

WHEREAS, Rear Admiral Taylor was a nuclear-trained surface warfare officer and served in the engineering departments of the USS *Abbot* (DD-629) and USS *Hoel* (DDG-13); he was the main propulsion assistant on the USS *Enterprise* (CVN-65) and the executive officer of the USS *Halsey* (CG-23); and

WHEREAS, Rear Admiral Taylor served as commanding officer of the USS *Semmes* (DDG-18), the USS *Mississippi* (CGN-40), and the Surface Warfare Officers School; as Commander, Cruiser Destroyer Group One, he commanded the *New Jersey* Battle Group, the Navy's first modern-era battleship battle group; and

WHEREAS, Rear Admiral Taylor believed that overseas tours provided opportunities for lasting memories and learning; he was an Olmsted Scholar at the University of Grenoble, France, from 1967 to 1969, earning a Diplome d'Etat in Political Science, and later earned a master's degree in area studies from American University in Washington, D.C.; from 1987 to 1989 he served as a J-3 (Operations) at Headquarters US European Command in Stuttgart, West Germany; and

WHEREAS, during Desert Storm, Rear Admiral Taylor served as Commander Middle East Force; in April 1991, he was assigned as Commander Naval Forces Central Command and led a successful multi-nation effort that cleared over 1,200 mines from the northern Persian Gulf; and

WHEREAS, upon Rear Admiral Taylor's retirement from the United States Navy, Mary Jane wrote his final set of orders after 25 Navy career moves, and the wonderful couple made Hampton Roads their home; he enjoyed a second career and retirement from the Innovation Center at Newport News Shipbuilding; and

WHEREAS, after a long career of serving his country, retirement for Ray Taylor was an opportunity to serve his community by immersing himself in bettering the region; as a brilliant man and a visionary, he led by example; and

WHEREAS, Ray Taylor became the President of the World Affairs Council of Greater Hampton Roads and then joined Future of Hampton Roads (FHR), a volunteer think tank organization that seeks solutions to future regional issues; at FHR, Ray Taylor volunteered to lead the study group tasked with analyzing the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), the federally mandated transportation planning arm of the Hampton Roads Planning District Commission; and

WHEREAS, Ray Taylor worked on improving the MPO for over a decade and was instrumental in its transformation into the Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization (HRTPO); with Ray's input, the HRTPO operated with improved processes, enabling the organization to speak with a unified and prioritized message; and

WHEREAS, with the same level of commitment, Ray Taylor moved on to promote high-speed rail projects for Hampton Roads; and

WHEREAS, Ray Taylor was named Hampton Roads Regionalist of the Year in 2010 and the region's Military Visionary Leader in 2011; and

WHEREAS, Ray Taylor possessed an amazing attention to detail, focus, and depth of knowledge, especially in the area of transportation; he shared his expertise with many local and state elected officials, state agency directors, and community leaders along the way; and

WHEREAS, Ray Taylor spoke passionately and eloquently on many topics, but could detail his vision for transportation in the Hampton Roads Region for hours in that wonderful Bostonian accent that never left him; he would always bring along fliers, pictures, charts, graphs, and a full report; and

WHEREAS, Rear Admiral Taylor served and sacrificed for his country and the Hampton Roads

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59 Region, and his spirit and commitment live on through those who continue to serve; as David Bell, the
60 president of Future of Hampton Roads, stated: "Ray's shoes will never be filled, but my hope is that
61 many will follow in his footsteps"; and

62 WHEREAS, a devoted family man and a renaissance man, Ray Taylor will be fondly remembered
63 and greatly missed by the love of his life, his wife of 53 years, Mary Jane; his two sons, Raynor and
64 Andrew; Andrew's wife, Lili, and their children, Michael and Michelle; many other family members and
65 friends; and fellow members of the United States Navy; now, therefore, be it

66 RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly hereby
67 note with great sadness the loss of Rear Admiral Raynor A. K. Taylor, USN (Ret.); and, be it

68 RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution
69 for presentation to the family of Rear Admiral Raynor A. K. Taylor, USN (Ret.), as an expression of the
70 General Assembly's acknowledgement of his supreme sacrifice and their sincere gratitude for his noble
71 service to the Commonwealth and our great nation.