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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 237

Offered January 29, 2014

Celebrating the life of Melvin L. Bergheim.

Patrons—Krupicka and Herring; Senators: Barker, Ebbin and Saslaw

WHEREAS, Melvin L. Bergheim, a deeply respected former vice mayor of the City of Alexandria, civil rights advocate, and a pillar of the community, died on October 20, 2013; and

WHEREAS, Melvin "Mel" Bergheim began his career as a journalist before becoming a project director for the Governmental Affairs Institute, a nonprofit organization; and

WHEREAS, Mel Bergheim met his wife, Donna, in 1957 and the couple married two years later in Mexico City; in 1960, they settled in Alexandria and began decades of service to the community; and

WHEREAS, in 1970, Mel Bergheim was elected to the Alexandria City Council, where he served for six years and was voted as vice mayor; and

WHEREAS, over the course of his distinguished career in public service, Mel Bergheim was a positive force for change; he worked to integrate city events, such as the annual George Washington birthday parade, championed health care for the poor, and established an adolescent health clinic that serves the area to this day; and

WHEREAS, Mel Bergheim understood the importance of preservation and worked to control air pollution, institute soil management controls, and help the city acquire the Dora Kelly Nature Park; and

WHEREAS, after serving as vice mayor, Mel Bergheim was still a voice for positive change in the community as a columnist for the *Alexandria Gazette Packet*, and he continued to offer his years of wisdom to a new generation of city leadership; and

WHEREAS, under United States President James Earl Carter, Jr., Mel Bergheim served as an undersecretary for the Department of Housing and Urban Development and the Department of Health and Human Services; and

WHEREAS, a dedicated member of many civic organizations, Mel Bergheim founded the Alexandria Federation of Civic Associations, an organization that fosters communication between city leaders and members of the community in different neighborhoods; and

WHEREAS, among many other awards and accolades throughout their lives, Mel and Donna Bergheim were honored as Living Legends of Alexandria in 2008 for their tireless work to better the community; and

WHEREAS, predeceased by his loving wife, Donna, Mel Bergheim will be greatly missed and fondly remembered by his children, Beth, Laura, David, and Maria, and their families, and many other family members and friends; 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 Melvin L. Bergheim, an indelible member of the Alexandria community and a true statesman; 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 Melvin L. Bergheim as an expression of the General Assembly's respect for his memory.

INTRODUCED

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