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HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 538

Offered June 11, 2014

Celebrating the life of Phyllis Eason Galanti.

Patrons—Loupassi, Carr, BaCote, Bell, Richard P., Bell, Robert B., Bloxom, Campbell, Chafin, Cole, Comstock, Cox, Dance, Davis, Edmunds, Fariss, Farrell, Fowler, Garrett, Gilbert, Greason, Habeeb, Head, Helsel, Hodges, Howell, Hugo, Ingram, Jones, Kilgore, Landes, Lingamfelter, Massie, McClellan, McQuinn, Miller, Morris, O'Bannon, O'Quinn, Peace, Ransone, Robinson, Rust, Scott, Stolle, Villanueva, Ward, Watts, Wilt, Yancey and Yost

WHEREAS, Phyllis Eason Galanti, a determined and compassionate advocate for the rights of American prisoners during the Vietnam War and a beloved member of the Richmond community, died on April 23, 2014; and

WHEREAS, Phyllis Galanti earned a bachelor's degree from the College of William and Mary and married Paul Edward Galanti, a pilot with the United States Navy; in 1966, Paul Galanti's plane was shot down over North Vietnam, and he was captured and held prisoner in the Hoa Lo prison complex for almost seven years; and

WHEREAS, during that time, Phyllis Galanti embarked on a long crusade to secure her husband's release, account for American soldiers who were declared missing in action (MIA), and ensure that American prisoners of war (POWs) were treated in accordance with the Geneva Conventions; and

WHEREAS, Phyllis Galanti organized other wives of POWs and formed the National League of Families and Friends of POWs and MIAs in Southeastern Asia in 1970, and she was later elected chair of the organization; and

WHEREAS, in 1971, Phyllis Galanti spearheaded a letter-writing campaign as part of the national Write Hanoi campaign; under her leadership, the Let's Bring Paul Galanti Home project generated more than one million letters, making it one of the largest responses in the nation; and

WHEREAS, expanding her letter-writing campaign to include President Richard M. Nixon and members of the United States Congress, Phyllis Galanti was invited to speak with the President and National Security Advisor Henry Kissinger on POW issues in 1972; and

WHEREAS, in a courageous attempt to secure freedom for American POWs, Phyllis Galanti attempted to meet directly with North Vietnamese leaders, travelling to Stockholm, Sweden, and Versailles, France, and she remained steadfast in her mission until her husband's release in 1973; and

WHEREAS, Phyllis Galanti received numerous awards and accolades for her work, including the American Legion Service Medal; she was recognized for her courage and determination by former Governor Mills E. Godwin, Jr., and the Paul and Phyllis Galanti Education Center at the Virginia War Memorial was named in her and her husband's honor; and

WHEREAS, Phyllis Galanti will be fondly remembered and greatly missed by her beloved husband of 51 years, Paul; sons, Jamie and Jeffrey, and their families; and numerous other family members and friends; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the House of Delegates hereby note with great sadness the loss of Phyllis Eason Galanti, a hero to American prisoners during the Vietnam War and a great Virginian; 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 Phyllis Eason Galanti as an expression of the House of Delegates' respect for her memory.

INTRODUCED

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