

2014 SPECIAL SESSION I

ENROLLED

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 5038

Celebrating the life of the Honorable William Thomas Parker.

Agreed to by the Senate, June 12, 2014
Agreed to by the House of Delegates, June 12, 2014

WHEREAS, the Honorable William Thomas Parker, former member of the Virginia House of Delegates and the Senate of Virginia, was born in Norfolk County, now the City of Chesapeake, on August 29, 1928, and entered into eternal rest on January 25, 2014; and

WHEREAS, the Honorable William "Bill" Thomas Parker graduated from Great Bridge High School in 1945 and attended the Norfolk Naval Shipyard Apprentice School; and

WHEREAS, the Honorable William Thomas Parker served his country valiantly and with distinction in the United States Air Force, and after his military service, he accepted a position with Norfolk Newspapers; and

WHEREAS, industrious and hardworking, the Honorable William Thomas Parker earned a reputation for his strong work ethic, which he demonstrated by selling sewing machines to supplement his income; in 1965, with the support and encouragement of family and friends, he joined several friends and business associates to develop the Chesapeake Memorial Gardens; and

WHEREAS, the Honorable William Thomas Parker, a man with keen business skills and acumen, became very successful in the cemetery establishment, which earned him the trust of leading businessmen and community leaders for other key developments in Chesapeake; he was president and owner of Wilpar Builders, Ltd.; and

WHEREAS, in the mid-1970s, the Honorable William Thomas Parker achieved his high school ambition of becoming an aviator, and he later united with a longtime friend in a partnership to operate the Chesapeake Airport and establish Mideastern Airways, which provided cargo and transportation services; and

WHEREAS, in 1976, the Honorable William Thomas Parker, with the support and urging of some of Chesapeake's most influential political leaders, began his successful political career in the Virginia House of Delegates, where he represented the 38th House District until 1979; as a Delegate, he served as a member of the House Committees on Education, Militia and Police, Nominations and Confirmations, and Roads and Internal Navigation; and

WHEREAS, the Honorable William Thomas Parker was elected to the Senate of Virginia in 1980 and represented the 14th Senatorial District until his retirement from public office in 1988; he offered his knowledge and expertise on legislation as a distinguished member of the Senate Committees on General Laws, Privileges and Elections, Rehabilitation and Social Services, and Transportation; and

WHEREAS, the Honorable William Thomas Parker, a successful and respected legislator, patroned and supported legislation to benefit his constituency in Chesapeake and voters throughout the Commonwealth; among his many accomplishments, he is credited with the creation of the Chesapeake Jubilee, the Chesapeake Expressway, and the maternity center of Chesapeake Regional Medical Center; he lobbied in Washington, D.C., skillfully for the Bower's Hill-Belleville Connector, which conveniently connects Chesapeake and other areas to the Monitor-Merrimac Memorial Bridge-Tunnel; and

WHEREAS, the Honorable William Thomas Parker led an outstanding career of dedicated public service; he served as chairman of the Hampton Roads Sanitation Commission and the Chesapeake Zoning Appeals Board; in 1982, he received his community's highest and most prestigious honor by being named First Citizen of Chesapeake; and

WHEREAS, the Honorable William Thomas Parker was a longtime and faithful member of Great Bridge United Methodist Church, Great Bridge Masonic Lodge No. 257, Shriners International, Khedive Shriners in Chesapeake, Chesapeake Shrine Club, and American Legion Post 280; he enjoyed hunting, fishing, flying, and golf, and in his later years, he loved attending his grandson's ball games and enjoying special times with his family; and

WHEREAS, the Honorable William Thomas Parker, a gifted community leader, astute politician, prudent businessman, and selfless public servant who represented the citizens of Chesapeake for 12 years, will be remembered fondly by his loving family and a host of relatives, friends, and colleagues; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the General Assembly hereby note with great sadness the loss of the Honorable William Thomas Parker, former member of the Virginia House of Delegates and the Senate of Virginia; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the family of the Honorable William Thomas Parker as an expression of the General

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Assembly's respect for his memory and gratitude for his contributions to the citizens of Chesapeake and the Commonwealth.