

2014 SPECIAL SESSION I

INTRODUCED

14200531D

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 5075

Offered September 17, 2014

Celebrating the life of James Conway Rees IV.

Patrons—Puller, Ebbin, Barker, Favola, Howell, Saslaw and Wexton; Delegates: Filler-Corn, Futrell, Herring, Keam, Kory, Krupicka, Plum, Sickles, Sullivan and Surovell

WHEREAS, James Conway Rees IV of Markham, who dedicated much of his life to preserving the history and heritage of the Commonwealth as longtime president of George Washington's Mount Vernon, died on September 9, 2014; and

WHEREAS, a native of Richmond, James "Jim" Rees earned a bachelor's degree from The College of William and Mary and a master's degree from The George Washington University; after completing his education, he carried out development work for The College of William and Mary and the National Trust for Historic Preservation; and

WHEREAS, Jim Rees joined the Mount Vernon staff in 1983 as the director of development and an associate director of the estate; in 1994, he became the executive director, a position later retitled president; and

WHEREAS, proudly calling himself the public relations agent for the nation's first president, Jim Rees spent most of his professional career at Mount Vernon; under his able leadership, the Mount Vernon endowment grew from \$4 million to \$100 million and the staff doubled in size; and

WHEREAS, Jim Rees oversaw the opening of the Ford Orientation Center and the Donald W. Reynolds Museum and Education Center in 2006, oversaw the restoration of the Mount Vernon whiskey distillery and gristmill, and raised funds for the Fred W. Smith National Library for the Study of George Washington; and

WHEREAS, throughout his 30-year career, Jim Rees promoted the image of George Washington as an athletic, active, and adventurous leader whose virtues of honesty, good judgment, and modesty provided a fine example for all Americans; in 2007, he published *George Washington's Leadership Lessons: What the Father of Our Country Can Teach Us About Effective Leadership and Character*; and

WHEREAS, striving to enhance the quality of life in the community, Jim Rees also volunteered his time and wise leadership with numerous civic and service organizations, including George Washington's Freemason lodge, and earned many awards and accolades for his good work; and

WHEREAS, Jim Rees will be fondly remembered and greatly missed by Kirk Blandford, his partner of 29 years, and numerous other family members and friends; 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 James Conway Rees IV, a dedicated historian who worked to preserve the unique heritage of one of the nation's founding fathers; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the family of James Conway Rees IV as an expression of the General Assembly's respect for his memory.

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