

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 378

Celebrating the life of Claudia Emerson.

Agreed to by the Senate, February 25, 2015
Agreed to by the House of Delegates, February 26, 2015

WHEREAS, Claudia Emerson, former poet laureate of Virginia and the 2006 winner of the Pulitzer Prize for poetry, died on December 4, 2014; and

WHEREAS, a native of Chatham, Claudia Emerson managed a used-book store early in her career and was a part-time letter carrier; the scenery on the 86-mile mail route through rural southern Virginia helped inspire her to write poetry; and

WHEREAS, Claudia Emerson was educated at Chatham Hall and received a bachelor's degree from the University of Virginia in 1979; she also studied at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, where she earned a master's degree; and

WHEREAS, Claudia Emerson taught at the University of Mary Washington starting in 1994; in 2013 she joined the faculty of Virginia Commonwealth University; throughout her time in the classroom she had a passion and love for teaching and helping her students grow; and

WHEREAS, in 2006, ten years after publishing her first book of poetry, Claudia Emerson won the Pulitzer Prize for poetry for *Late Wife*, a collection that examined the complexities of marriage, divorce, and death; and

WHEREAS, Claudia Emerson was named poet laureate of Virginia in 2008; she was awarded a Guggenheim Fellowship in 2011 and received fellowships from the Library of Congress, the Virginia Commission for the Arts, and the National Endowment for the Arts; and

WHEREAS, Claudia Emerson is the author of five collections of poetry in addition to *Late Wife*, the last of which is to be published posthumously; she published works in magazines and journals, including the *New Yorker* and *Poetry* magazine; and

WHEREAS, Claudia Emerson, who was predeceased by her father and brother, is survived by her husband, Kent Ippolito; her mother, Mollie; and many 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 Claudia Emerson, former poet laureate of Virginia and the 2006 winner of the Pulitzer Prize for poetry; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the family of Claudia Emerson as an expression of the General Assembly's respect for her memory.