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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 190

Offered January 20, 2016

*Celebrating the life of Joseph Rodney Johnson.*

Patrons—Howell, Adams, Albo, Cline, Leftwich, Loupassi and Peace; Senators: Chafin, Garrett and Stuart

WHEREAS, Joseph Rodney Johnson of Henrico County, an attorney who was an expert in wills, trusts, and estate planning and who helped reform and update the Commonwealth's probate law, a proud veteran of the United States military, a professor, person of deep faith, and a devoted husband and father, died on June 11, 2015; and

WHEREAS, Rodney Johnson was born in Richmond and served in the United States Air Force; he earned bachelor's and law degrees from The College of William and Mary and a master's degree from New York University; and

WHEREAS, after receiving his law degree in 1967, Rodney Johnson began teaching at the Marshall-Wythe School of Law at The College of William and Mary; in 1970, he accepted a position at the University of Richmond's T.C. Williams School of Law and taught at the school until he retired in 1999 and became a professor emeritus; and

WHEREAS, Rodney Johnson's expertise in wills, trusts, and estate planning was recognized by his peers and by the Commonwealth; he frequently worked with members of the General Assembly and the Governor to draft and revise legislation related to probate law; and

WHEREAS, as the author of more than 70 articles and brochures, Rodney Johnson assisted countless people in understanding the need for wills and end-of-life planning; he also helped make inheritance laws fairer for surviving spouses; and

WHEREAS, Rodney Johnson was a life member of the American Law Institute and was a member of the Legislative Committee of the Virginia Bar Association's Section on Wills, Trusts, & Estates; and

WHEREAS, additionally, from 1994 to 1999, Rodney Johnson ably represented the Commonwealth as the Virginia commissioner for the National Conference of Commissioners on Uniform State Laws; and

WHEREAS, faith was at the forefront of Rodney Johnson's life; he held many leadership positions at Monument Heights Baptist Church and participated in more than 25 disaster relief missions at home and abroad; and

WHEREAS, Rodney Johnson served his community in many ways; he and his wife, also an attorney, wrote more than 10,000 pro bono wills and trusts in support of Baptist ministries in the Commonwealth; and

WHEREAS, Rodney Johnson, who enjoyed reading and tinkering, was also an avid runner; he completed more than 150 races and ran marathons in 48 states; and

WHEREAS, Rodney Johnson will be greatly missed and fondly remembered by his wife, Catherine; his children, William and Abigail; his grandchildren; and many other family members, friends, and colleagues; 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 Joseph Rodney Johnson of Henrico County, an esteemed attorney and professor, a man of deep faith, and a devoted husband and father; 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 Joseph Rodney Johnson as an expression of the General Assembly's respect for his memory.

INTRODUCED

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