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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 506

Offered March 7, 2016

Commending Michael S. Golden.

Patrons—Cox, Aird, Carr, Ingram, Loupassi, Robinson and Ware; Senators: Chase, Dance and Sturtevant

WHEREAS, Michael S. Golden will retire as director of the Chesterfield County Department of Parks and Recreation on April 1, 2016, after 36 years of service; and

WHEREAS, Michael "Mike" S. Golden was hired in August 1979 as superintendent of parks, and in January 1993 was promoted to director of parks and recreation, a position he held for 23 years; and

WHEREAS, Mike Golden leads a dynamic department with 54 major parks and trails and 6,600 acres of outdoor space that provides comprehensive recreational programs and events to a diverse and growing county population; and

WHEREAS, Mike Golden had a vision of a comprehensive park system and worked tirelessly to showcase the county's natural, historical, and cultural resources; he has been a strong proponent for the acquisition of properties that not only support conservation and preservation, but accessibility for the public; Chesterfield County parks now see more than five million visits per year; and

WHEREAS, under Mike Golden's leadership, the county added Falling Creek Greenway, Dutch Gap Conservation Area, Robious Landing Park, Brown and Williamson Conservation Area, Anna B. Atkins Park, Ettrick/VSU Riverside Park, Swift Creek Conservation Area, Radcliffe Conservation Area, and the pending James River Conservation Area, collectively adding more than 2,500 natural resource acres; and

WHEREAS, the park system also grew with the addition of Mid-Lothian Mines, Eppington Plantation, historic Point of Rocks, and Henricus Historical Park, adding 150 acres of cultural and historical resources; Mike Golden guided the complex process to acquire these sites, balancing the requirements of resource protection with the desire for public access, and sensitively handling the negotiations to satisfy the sometimes competing goals between landowners, grant agencies, state and federal stewardship agencies, and local interest groups; and

WHEREAS, Mike Golden's extensive experience with community and local government and his steady and professional leadership style enables and encourages staff to provide all services with the highest level of quality and customer service; and

WHEREAS, Mike Golden is recognized for his forethought and advocacy to expand the trail system in the park system, particularly in Conservation Areas and Greenways, as a way to promote healthy living and an appreciation of the natural beauty in Chesterfield County and, recently, through the passage of the Bikeways and Trails Chapter of the Comprehensive Plan, the first countywide plan to comprehensively address the needs of both pedestrians and cyclists; and

WHEREAS, Mike Golden is a strong advocate for active living and works in cooperation with the Sports Backers organization to continually promote healthy lifestyles through recreational programs for people of all ages and backgrounds; and

WHEREAS, Mike Golden was instrumental in securing the 15 annual major sporting events that drew 50,000 plus visitors to the region, providing an economic benefit of \$22 million to Chesterfield County and \$50 million to the Richmond region; and

WHEREAS, Mike Golden has been instrumental in the opening of numerous athletic and recreational facilities in the county, including Clover Hill Sports Complex, the Warbro Road Athletic Complex, the YMCA Skatepark Partnership, Providence Park land, the first synthetic turf fields at Mary B. Stratton Park, the 60-acre Lowes Sports Complex site, the KaBoom playground, Ettrick Riverside Park, Huguenot Maintenance Shop, a new soccer field at Point of Rocks, and the Richmond Kickers Complex, and strengthening the amenities at the River City Sportsplex; and

WHEREAS, Mike Golden has for many years served as an adjunct professor at Virginia State University (VSU); he helped to instill a partnership and good working relationship on numerous projects between VSU and the Chesterfield County Department of Parks and Recreation, and helped to secure a grant for construction of the VSU/Ettrick Trail Project; and

WHEREAS, Mike Golden is respected for his foresight, diligence, and relationship building that has resulted in valuable partnerships and legacy acquisitions, and he is a role model for patience and the ability to work through difficult projects, complex negotiations, and citizen concerns; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commend Michael S. Golden on the occasion of his retirement as director of the Chesterfield County Department of Parks and Recreation; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution

INTRODUCED

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59 for presentation to Michael S. Golden as an expression of the General Assembly's admiration for his
60 many contributions to Chesterfield County and the Commonwealth.