

16103606D

## SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 132

Offered January 28, 2016

*Celebrating the life of Robert E. Simon, Jr.*

Patrons—Howell and Marsden; Delegates: Boysko and Plum

WHEREAS, Robert E. Simon, Jr., the visionary urban planner who was respected throughout the world for his creation of Reston, a planned community that has inspired countless architects and planners and served as a model for other such communities, died on September 21, 2015, at the age of 101; and

WHEREAS, a native of New York City, Robert Simon earned a bachelor's degree from Harvard University and joined many of the other young men of his generation in service to the nation during World War II; and

WHEREAS, after his honorable military service, Robert Simon returned home to manage his family's real estate business; in 1961, he sold Carnegie Hall, one of his family's holdings, to fund the creation of a mixed-use, planned town, where residents could live, work, and play in the same area; and

WHEREAS, Robert Simon envisioned Reston as a "New Town," where individuals and families of every race, background, and income level could find a home; his unique founding principles of "smart growth," "aging in place," "green cities," and "new urbanism" are studied and admired throughout the nation and the world; and

WHEREAS, influenced by New York City's Central Park, Robert Simon believed that both structural and natural beauty are essential to a good life and that neighborhoods should incorporate a full range of housing styles to best accommodate the needs of all community members; and

WHEREAS, in 1964, the first residents moved into the Lake Anne Village Center, Reston's first village and the neighborhood that bears the most hallmarks of Robert Simon's original designs; Reston now houses nearly 60,000 residents in a walkable community of neighborhoods and village centers connected by dozens of miles of paved pathways to schools, recreational facilities, shopping centers, and businesses; and

WHEREAS, after returning to New York for a period, Robert Simon moved back to Reston in 1992 and became the community's most active citizen; he served as a two-time at-large board member of the Reston Association and was a passionate supporter for education, environmental, and youth programs; and

WHEREAS, Robert Simon earned many awards and accolades for his achievements in urban planning, including the Planning Pioneer Award from the American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP); Reston earned the National Planning Landmark Award from the AICP, was named one of the Best Places to Live by *CNN Money Magazine*, and was the first community to be named as an Urban Wildlife Habitat by the National Wildlife Federation; and

WHEREAS, Robert Simon will be fondly remembered and greatly missed by numerous 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 Robert E. Simon, Jr., a highly respected urban planner and the founder of the acclaimed Reston community; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the family of Robert E. Simon, Jr., as an expression of the General Assembly's respect for his memory.

INTRODUCED

SJ132