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## HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 840

Offered January 27, 2017

*Commending Colonel John Jack William Hilgers, USMC, Ret.*

Patrons—Cox, Stolle, Anderson, Bloxom, Boysko, Byron, Carr, Cole, Davis, Dudenhefer, Fariss, Fowler, Freitas, Habeeb, Heretick, Hope, Howell, Hugo, Ingram, Jones, Knight, Krizek, Landes, Leftwich, Lingamfelter, Massie, Minchew, Morefield, Mullin, O'Bannon, Peace, Pillion, Plum, Rasoul, Simon, Villanueva and Ware; Senators: Cosgrove, Deeds, DeSteph, Ebbin, Edwards, Hanger, Howell, Lewis, Peake, Reeves, Ruff, Stuart and Wagner

WHEREAS, Colonel John Jack William Hilgers, USMC, Ret., served with distinction in the United States Marine Corps for 31 years, demonstrating extraordinary leadership, professional skill, and unwavering courage and commitment to the defense of the United States; and

WHEREAS, Jack Hilgers, as a captain in the Marine Corps during the Vietnam War, was awarded the Navy Cross for extraordinary heroism as battalion operations officer of the Second Battalion, Fourth Marines, Third Marine Division (Reinforced), Fleet Marine Force, in connection with operations against the enemy in the Republic of Vietnam on August 23 - 24, 1966; and

WHEREAS, as a colonel in the Marine Corps, Jack Hilgers was noted for cost effectiveness and comprehensive resources management by the United States General Accounting Office and the House of Representatives Appropriations Committee in 1987; and

WHEREAS, after retiring from the Marine Corps, Jack Hilgers continued a lifetime of public service by earning a Ph.D. in public administration and research with a minor in international relations from Old Dominion University (ODU) where he served for 10 years, established the ODU Maritime, Ports, and Logistics Management program, which is one of the few such initiatives in the world and is thriving after 25 years, and he later served on the ODU Board of Visitors; and

WHEREAS, from 1999 to 2007, Jack Hilgers served as legislative assistant to the Honorable Leo C. Wardrup, Jr., before joining the Department of Veterans Services (DVS); he played a key role in the 2002 study and 2003 legislation that established DVS and the Veteran Services Foundation (VSF) as separate agencies, as well as the Board of Veterans Services (BVS) and the Joint Leadership Council of Veterans Service Organizations (JLC); and

WHEREAS, Jack Hilgers prompted the initiation of the bipartisan and highly popular Military and Veterans Caucus in the Virginia General Assembly and assisted with organizing and conducting its fully attended weekly meetings; and

WHEREAS, Jack Hilgers has been a legislative and organizational development advisor, involved every step of the way, as DVS, VSF, BVS, and JLC have evolved and grown, and he has contributed significantly to the success of the two agencies, the board, and the council; he continued to serve the Commonwealth's veterans with Leo Wardrup, who served as a VSF trustee after his retirement from public office; and

WHEREAS, Jack Hilgers demonstrated proven effectiveness in influencing public policy as a highly respected member of a team that successfully advocated for more than five dozen pieces of veterans and military-related legislation that was introduced, amended, and passed from 2006 until his retirement; and

WHEREAS, Jack Hilgers worked diligently to expand the services that DVS and VSF provide to Virginia's veterans and developed extensive joint policies and procedures that are still used by the department and the foundation today; and

WHEREAS, Jack Hilgers personally educated all the members of the VSF Board of Trustees in the unique aspects of the foundation's philanthropic duties, even traveling from his home in Hampton Roads to the Marine Corps Heritage Center in Quantico and points in western Virginia to orient new members; and

WHEREAS, Jack Hilgers worked tirelessly to coordinate fundraising activities throughout the Commonwealth and helped VSF secure more than \$3 million in donations to assist veterans and their families; and

WHEREAS, as executive director of VSF, Jack Hilgers served with distinction as an "extraordinary contributor" to both VSF and DVS, ensuring the integrity of the Commonwealth's trust and donors' wishes since 2007; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commend Colonel John Jack William Hilgers, USMC, Ret., for his lifetime of service to the Commonwealth and Virginia's veterans on the occasion of his retirement; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to Colonel John Jack William Hilgers, USMC, Ret., as an expression of the General

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55 Assembly's admiration for his 31 years of service with the United States Marine Corps and 28 years of  
56 service to the Commonwealth, demonstrating extraordinary leadership, professional skill, and an  
57 unwavering commitment to the men and women of every branch of the United States Armed Forces and  
58 Virginia.