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SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 372

Offered February 6, 2017

*Commending Thomas L. McKeon.*

Patrons—Edwards; Delegates: Head and Poindexter

WHEREAS, in December 2016, Thomas L. McKeon retired as executive director of the Roanoke Higher Education Center, after 17 years of extraordinary and exemplary service; and

WHEREAS, as the first executive director, Thomas "Tom" McKeon oversaw the renovation, preservation, and repurposing of the old Norfolk and Western Railway headquarters building to house the Roanoke Higher Education Center and recruited partner institutions of higher education and workforce training to create a model for delivering education and training in the twenty-first century; and

WHEREAS, Tom McKeon received a bachelor's degree in English literature from St. Bonaventure University and received a master's degree and a doctoral degree in higher education administration from the University of Virginia; and

WHEREAS, Tom McKeon served as an active duty officer in the United States Army and began his career in higher education at the University of Virginia in the School of Continuing and Professional Studies; and

WHEREAS, prior to becoming executive director at the Roanoke Higher Education Center, Tom McKeon served as director of the William and Ida Friday Center for Continuing Education at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill; and

WHEREAS, through Tom McKeon's leadership, the Roanoke Higher Education Center, which opened in 2000, became known as a "national model for the new millennium"; and

WHEREAS, as a result of his leadership, the Roanoke Higher Education Center now offers more than 300 programs of study, ranging from GED to Ph.D., through 14 partner institutions; more than 9,000 people have completed degree, certificate, and workforce training programs at the Center since it opened; and

WHEREAS, Tom McKeon oversaw establishment of the Claude Moore Education Complex by renovating and preserving the historic Henry Street shops and Lincoln Theater in order to house Virginia Western Community College's popular culinary arts institute; and

WHEREAS, Tom McKeon has been a leader in the civic life of Roanoke in numerous ways, including service on the boards of the Roanoke Regional Chamber of Commerce, Roanoke Arts Commission, United Way of Roanoke Valley, and Roanoke Valley Convention and Visitors Bureau, among others; and

WHEREAS, Tom McKeon recruited a dedicated, loyal, and talented staff which supported his extraordinary leadership as executive director of the Roanoke Higher Education Center; and

WHEREAS, Tom McKeon has said he will miss his colleagues and service in higher education, but he looks forward to his retirement and spending more time with his lovely wife, Judith, and their children and grandchildren, as well as boating on the North Carolina coast; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commend Thomas L. McKeon on his retirement as executive director of the Roanoke Higher Education Center; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to Thomas L. McKeon as an expression of the General Assembly's admiration for his contributions and dedication to expanding access to higher education in the Roanoke region.

INTRODUCED

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