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## SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 398

Offered February 13, 2017

*Commending Cliff Gauthier.*

Patron—Mason

WHEREAS, Cliff Gauthier, the legendary head coach of The College of William and Mary men's gymnastics program for 43 years, retired on January 1, 2017; and

WHEREAS, a native of Denver, Colorado, Cliff Gauthier earned a bachelor's degree from the University of Denver, where he was a top eight NCAA Division I finalist in various gymnastics events and was selected as the university's outstanding scholar-athlete his senior year; and

WHEREAS, Cliff Gauthier earned a master's degree in kinesiology from the University of Colorado, taught mathematics in the Denver area, and coached at the University of Denver before deciding to move East; and

WHEREAS, Cliff Gauthier arrived at The College of William and Mary in 1973, thinking he would stay for one or two years, and four and a half decades later, he retired as the longest-serving coach in the institution's history; and

WHEREAS, Cliff Gauthier's stellar and extraordinary record as William & Mary men's gymnastics head coach included 856 victories, 13 USA Gymnastics Collegiate National Team Championships, four Eastern College Athletic Conference titles, and 15 College Gymnastics Association Coach of the Year awards; and

WHEREAS, over the course of his career, Cliff Gauthier has coached two NCAA champions, two runners-up, and 10 All-Americans, and William & Mary has won a record eight College Gymnastics Association National Academic team championships; and

WHEREAS, during Cliff Gauthier's tenure, William & Mary gymnasts won 216 USA Gymnastics Collegiate All-America awards, more than any other college or university since the awards began in 1990; the college leads the nation with more individual College Gymnastics Association All-America Scholar-Athlete honors than any other program; and

WHEREAS, Cliff Gauthier received some of the College of William and Mary's most prestigious distinctions, including the Thomas Ashley Graves, Jr. Award for Sustained Excellence in Teaching in 2004, and in 2014 he was designated an honorary alumnus; and

WHEREAS, Cliff Gauthier believes in using gymnastics to make people's lives better; he taught his gymnasts the importance of community service and volunteering, instilling in them a culture of giving back that remains with them long after graduation; and

WHEREAS, Cliff Gauthier has been described aptly as the patriarch of the William & Mary men's gymnastics program and the David of David versus Goliath in the sport of college gymnastics; over four decades, he built the program into a beacon of what intercollegiate athletics should be; and

WHEREAS, Cliff Gauthier's greatest legacy is the tremendous impact he had on the lives of generations of William & Mary gymnasts, and his mentorship resulted in unprecedented dedication from alumni in maintaining a lifelong connection to the gymnastics program; and

WHEREAS, Cliff Gauthier is not leaving the William & Mary gymnastics program behind entirely, as he will continue to serve on staff as an assistant coach; and he will forever be in debt to the college for providing such a fertile ground to develop his philosophy of sport, coaching, and education; and

WHEREAS, in his "semi-retirement," Cliff Gauthier looks forward to spending more time with his wife, Linda, without whose support his awe-inspiring career would not have been possible; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commend Cliff Gauthier on his retirement as head coach of The College of William and Mary men's gymnastics team; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to Cliff Gauthier as an expression of the General Assembly's admiration for his extraordinary 43-year career and unprecedented record of excellence in collegiate men's gymnastics.

INTRODUCED

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