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HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 38

Offered January 29, 2018

Commending the Virginia Autism Project.

Patrons—Miyares, Bell, Richard P., Bloxom, Collins, Davis, Filler-Corn, Garrett, Hodges, Hugo, LaRock, McGuire, Pogge, Thomas, Wilt and Yancey

WHEREAS, Mark Llobell, a real estate professional in Virginia Beach, has led efforts to support families of children with autism through his work with the Virginia Autism Project and other state and national organizations such as Autism Speaks; and

WHEREAS, after his two-year-old grandson was diagnosed with autism, a developmental disorder that impairs social and communication skills, Mark Llobell founded the Virginia Autism Project to raise awareness of the disorder and support other families struggling to find and afford treatment; and

WHEREAS, Mark Llobell advocated for legislation to require that insurance plans cover treatment for children with autism, including applied behavior analysis and other forms of therapy to help affected children speak, learn, and interact with others; and

WHEREAS, after such legislation was passed in 2011, Mark Llobell and the Virginia Autism Project continued to work with state officials to implement the law and help ensure the efficient and effective delivery of services; treatments are usually individualized and intensive, requiring a large commitment of time and resources for both parents and professionals; and

WHEREAS, Mark Llobell worked with other autism organizations in the Commonwealth and the United States, such as Autism Speaks, to share information, support research, and conduct outreach activities; and

WHEREAS, Mark Llobell created the Tidewater Autism Summits, which have been held annually in Virginia Beach for the past nine years; the summits have become the largest gathering of autism service providers and families with autism in the Commonwealth, if not the entire Mid-Atlantic region, and are held cost-free for all vendors and families; year one attendance was 10 vendors and 35 families, and this year more than 1,000 people from across Virginia participated and gained valuable services for their loved ones with autism; and

WHEREAS, in 2015, Mark Llobell worked with the Autism Speaks National Capital Area chapter to host events that attracted 50 Hampton Roads business leaders, health care professionals, and community activists and in excess of 75 attendees from the Richmond area; these events raised awareness of how autism can affect everyday life and the workplace as the number of adults with Autism grows; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, That the Virginia Autism Project hereby be commended for its compassionate work to support families of children with autism; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to Mark Llobell of the Virginia Autism Project as an expression of the House of Delegates' admiration for the organization's service to the residents of Hampton Roads and the Commonwealth.

INTRODUCED

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