

## SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 131

*Celebrating the life of Martha Jeraldine Morris Tata.*

Agreed to by the Senate, February 15, 2018  
 Agreed to by the House of Delegates, February 23, 2018

WHEREAS, Martha Jeraldine Morris Tata of Stanardsville, a devoted educator who inspired countless students to become lifelong learners and a beloved wife, mother, and friend who brought joy to everyone she met, died on November 26, 2017; and

WHEREAS, a native of Greene County, Jeraldine Morris Tata learned the value of hard work and responsibility at a young age while working in her family's mercantile store, E.B. Morris and Sons; and

WHEREAS, Jeraldine Morris Tata graduated from William Monroe High School, attended Mary Washington College, and earned a bachelor's degree from Madison College and a master's degree from Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University; and

WHEREAS, Jeraldine Morris Tata enjoyed a long and fulfilling career as a teacher and guidance counselor at schools throughout Virginia; she served students at Crozet High School in Crozet, Albemarle High School in Albemarle County; Granby High School, Norview High School, and Maury High School in Norfolk; and Kempsville High School and Independence Middle School in Virginia Beach; and

WHEREAS, throughout her career in education, Jeraldine Morris Tata demonstrated a natural ability to recognize other people's strengths, helping thousands of students prepare for success in higher education and their careers as well as giving them the tools to become responsible citizens of the Commonwealth; in 1980, she helped a Kempsville High School class earn more than \$1 million in scholarships for the first time in the school's history; and

WHEREAS, Jeraldine Morris Tata met her husband, the Honorable Robert "Bob" Tata, while teaching at Albemarle High School and proudly supported him during his career as a high school athletics coach and used her grace and stylish charm as the backbone and organizer of his campaigns to help him win 15 elections to the House of Delegates; and

WHEREAS, after teaching and counseling for 40 years, Jeraldine Morris Tata was asked to run for the Virginia Beach School Board, where she enthusiastically served the school system, strived to improve school conditions, and was an advocate for teachers, custodians, bus drivers, and all staff and faculty members; and

WHEREAS, after her well-earned retirement as a teacher and counselor, Jeraldine Morris Tata returned to her beloved Greene County and built a home, Pioneer Haven, Morris-Tata Farm, on her family's farm, where she lived with the support of her daughter, Kendall; she placed the land under a conservation easement to help protect the Commonwealth's valuable natural resources; and

WHEREAS, Jeraldine Morris Tata was selected as one of the Portraits of Greene County and her picture was published in Glen McClure's book with a write-up honoring her for preserving Greene County's agricultural heritage; and

WHEREAS, Jeraldine Morris Tata was selected as one of the inaugural Grand Dames of Greene County for her lifelong commitment, passion for, and contributions to her adored home county; and

WHEREAS, Jeraldine Morris Tata continued to serve the community by supporting the business department and art programs at William Monroe High School; she was happiest when sharing stories with and caring for family and friends or entertaining visitors and students at Pioneer Haven; and

WHEREAS, a devout Christian who was guided by her deep and abiding faith, Jeraldine Morris Tata enjoyed fellowship and worship with the congregation of Grace Episcopal Church in Stanardsville, where she pioneered the beginning of stained glass windows being dedicated in memory of loved ones; and

WHEREAS, Jeraldine Morris Tata appreciated everything beautiful and took pride in who she was and how she presented herself, making our lives and world better for having been touched by her gracious presence; and

WHEREAS, Jeraldine Morris Tata will be fondly remembered and greatly missed by her husband of 62 years, Bob; her children, Robert, Anthony, and Kendall, and their families; and numerous other family members, friends, and former students; 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 Martha Jeraldine Morris Tata, a passionate educator and a vibrant member of the Stanardsville community; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the family of Martha Jeraldine Morris Tata as an expression of the General Assembly's

respect for her memory.