

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 154

Celebrating the life of the Honorable Lacey E. Putney.

Agreed to by the Senate, March 1, 2018
Agreed to by the House of Delegates, March 7, 2018

WHEREAS, the Honorable Lacey E. Putney, who retired as the longest-serving member of the General Assembly and one of the longest-serving state legislators in the United States, and who left an indelible mark on the Commonwealth while representing the residents of the 19th District for 50 years, died on August 26, 2017; and

WHEREAS, a native of Big Island in Bedford County, Lacey Putney graduated from M.E. Marcuse High School and was recruited by Washington and Lee University to play baseball; after earning his bachelor's degree, he honorably served the nation as a member of the United States Air Force from 1950 to 1954, then returned to his alma mater and earned a law degree; and

WHEREAS, Lacey Putney started his own law practice in Bedford, where he was joined by his brother, Macon, and his secretary and later legislative assistant, Betty Lou Layne, and provided expert legal guidance to members of the community for more than 55 years; and

WHEREAS, desirous to be of further service to the Commonwealth, Lacey Putney ran for and was elected to the Virginia House of Delegates in 1961 and ably represented the residents of the cities of Bedford and Covington and all or part of the counties of Alleghany, Bedford, and Botetourt; and

WHEREAS, Delegate Putney joined the Virginia House of Delegates when the population of the Commonwealth was half of what it is today, the General Assembly met every two years for 60 days, and members had no offices or computers and waited in line to use phone booths on the first floor of the Capitol; and

WHEREAS, Delegate Putney witnessed many changes to state government throughout his distinguished career and introduced or supported numerous important legislative initiatives to benefit the citizens of the Commonwealth; and

WHEREAS, Delegate Putney patroned legislation to create the Virginia Tuition Assistance Grant Program, encouraged the use of a six-year capital outlay planning process to help maintain the Commonwealth's coveted Triple A credit rating and, known as the guardian of the Virginia Retirement System, championed pension reform in the 1990s; and

WHEREAS, Delegate Putney offered valuable insights as a member of the Rules and Privileges and Elections Committees, and as Speaker of the House from June 2002 to January 2003, he provided firm and steady leadership to the House of Delegates; and

WHEREAS, as founder, former chair, and member of the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission, Delegate Putney worked to ensure that state government operated in the most efficient and effective manner possible for the taxpayers of Virginia; and

WHEREAS, a seasoned legislator, Delegate Putney was a powerful voice for fiscal conservatism and responsible stewardship of the Commonwealth's financial resources as chair of the House Appropriations Committee; he worked tirelessly with fellow legislators to guide Virginia through tough economic times and make difficult decisions regarding the best use of state funds; and

WHEREAS, committed to the growth and prosperity of his district, Delegate Putney worked with local and state government officials and business leaders to bring businesses and jobs to his constituency, notably through the expansion of Barr Laboratories in Bedford County; and

WHEREAS, Delegate Putney had a deep appreciation for his district's many contributions to the Commonwealth and nation, serving as a trusted advocate for the National D-Day Memorial in Bedford and supporting numerous cultural and historical preservation efforts; and

WHEREAS, Delegate Putney also served his community and profession in numerous capacities over the years, including as a trustee of the Patrick Henry Boys & Girls Plantation, former director of the Bedford Area Chamber of Commerce, former president of the Bedford Bar Association, and member of the Masons, Scottish Rite, and American Legion; and

WHEREAS, Delegate Putney garnered numerous awards and accolades over the course of his distinguished career, including twice being named Legislator of the Year by the Virginia Governmental Employees Association and receiving a Distinguished Service Award from Virginia Military Institute, the Distinguished Alumni Award from Washington and Lee University, and the Thomas B. Murphy Longevity of Service Award for 45 years of distinguished service in the Virginia General Assembly from the Southern Legislative Conference; and

WHEREAS, Delegate Putney was honored to be a member of the oldest continuous lawmaking body in the New World, and he worked to preserve the integrity and collegiality of that noble body

throughout his illustrious career, earning himself a clear place in the annals of Virginia history; and

WHEREAS, predeceased by his first wife, Elizabeth, Lacey Putney will be fondly remembered and greatly missed by his wife, Carmela; his children, Susan and Lacey, Jr., and their families; and numerous other family members, friends, and colleagues on both sides of the aisle; 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 the Honorable Lacey E. Putney, a model legislator who demonstrated unwavering commitment to his constituents and all residents of the Commonwealth; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the family of the Honorable Lacey E. Putney, as an expression of the General Assembly's respect for his memory.