

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 78

Celebrating the life of Gerald Thomas Halpin.

Agreed to by the Senate, January 25, 2018
Agreed to by the House of Delegates, February 2, 2018

WHEREAS, Gerald Thomas Halpin of Jackson, Wyoming, an accomplished real estate professional and an admired community leader who left his mark on Northern Virginia through his visionary development of Tysons Corner, died on August 14, 2017; and

WHEREAS, Gerald Halpin learned the value of hard work and responsibility at a young age; as a child of the Great Depression, he helped to support his family by selling apples, cherries, and currants from their backyard in Scranton, Pennsylvania; and

WHEREAS, working as a glass blower and plastics manufacturer, Gerald Halpin paid his own way through night classes at the University of Scranton, then joined many of the other young men of his generation in service to the nation during World War II; and

WHEREAS, Gerald Halpin learned carpentry and other trade skills as a member of the United States Naval Construction Battalions during the war, before attending Syracuse University on the GI Bill while supporting himself by painting houses; and

WHEREAS, Gerald Halpin married Helen Richter, and the couple relocated to the Commonwealth, where he attended Georgetown University and worked as a credit investigator and a carpenter; and

WHEREAS, after a chance meeting with the president of Atlantic Research Corporation, Gerald Halpin was hired to oversee the company's business operations; he helped the company expand into Fairfax County, where it built its first headquarters in 1958; and

WHEREAS, in 1960, Gerald Halpin founded Commonwealth Capital, which developed Landmark Center in Alexandria; he later established West Group, acquiring 125 acres of farmland near Tysons Corner to build West Gate, which housed 20 companies by 1970; and

WHEREAS, at one time, West Group owned and operated more than 500 acres of office space at West Gate and West Park, most of which was leased to government agencies and private businesses; in 1976, West Gate was valued at \$16.6 million, making it the third most valuable commercial parcel in the country; and

WHEREAS, in the 1990s, Gerald Halpin re-envisioned Tysons Corner as a dense, varied commercial and residential area akin to Manhattan; he replaced the existing West Group properties with taller, denser buildings and advocated for the extension of the Washington D.C., Metro to Tysons Corner; and

WHEREAS, through his leadership and foresight, Gerald Halpin helped to make Tysons Corner the thriving community that it is today; and

WHEREAS, over the course of his 50-year career, Gerald Halpin completed more than 100 real estate projects, developing more than 14 million square feet of office space and thousands of apartments; and

WHEREAS, Gerald Halpin was also a founder and active member of the 123 Club, which helped fund George Mason University, and he served as the first finance chair of the Wolf Trap Foundation; he earned many awards and accolades for his work, including recognition from the Fairfax County Chamber of Commerce; and

WHEREAS, in his later life, Gerald Halpin was a passionate advocate for the environment, serving as chair of the Grand Teton National Park Foundation Board of Directors and as director of the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation; and

WHEREAS, Gerald Halpin will be fondly remembered and greatly missed by his wife, Helen; children, Peter, Michael, and Christina, and their families; and numerous other family members and friends; 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 Gerald Thomas Halpin, a respected real estate developer and community leader who made invaluable contributions to Northern Virginia; and, be it

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

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