

2018 SESSION

ENROLLED

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 38

Celebrating the life of Ronald E. Carrier.

Agreed to by the Senate, February 22, 2018

WHEREAS, Ronald E. Carrier, a bold visionary who touched countless lives as he helped James Madison University become one of the Commonwealth's most renowned institutions of higher education, died on September 18, 2017; and

WHEREAS, a native of Bluff City, Tennessee, Ronald "Ron" Carrier came from humble roots and learned the value of hard work and responsibility at a young age on his family's farm; he was active in high school sports and later credited one of his coaches with inspiring him to pursue higher education; and

WHEREAS, Ron Carrier earned a bachelor's degree from East Tennessee State University, where he was named class president and met the love of his life, the former Edith Marie Johnson; after graduation, the couple married and moved to Illinois, where he completed master's and doctoral degrees at the University of Illinois; and

WHEREAS, Ron Carrier began his career in education in 1960 as an associate professor of economics at the University of Mississippi; in 1963, he joined Memphis State University, where he served as a professor, director of research programs, provost, and vice president for academic affairs; and

WHEREAS, in 1971, Ron Carrier was named president of what was then known as Madison College; despite being the youngest college president in the United States at the time, his transformative leadership helped the college successfully adapt to coeducational learning; and

WHEREAS, among his many accomplishments, Ron Carrier changed the name of the college to James Madison University in 1977 and oversaw significant increases in enrollment, the incorporation of a Division I athletics program, and the addition of 40 new programs, five new colleges, and a graduate school; and

WHEREAS, Ron Carrier took an active role in campus life, from helping interview entry-level positions and personally landscaping campus grounds to securing funds for more than 37 expansion and new construction projects during his tenure, including the Edith J. Carrier Arboretum and Botanical Gardens; and

WHEREAS, treating all of his faculty and staff equally, Ron Carrier inspired others to reach new heights of leadership through his folksy charm; he built strong, personal relationships with his students, many of whom affectionately knew him as "Uncle Ron;" and

WHEREAS, Ron Carrier placed a high emphasis on technology and worked to give his students every advantage for the future, founding the College of Integrated Science and Technology; he also served as president of the Commonwealth's Center for Innovative Technology from 1986 to 1987; and

WHEREAS, during his 46-year tenure, Ron Carrier guided James Madison University from a small college with 4,000 students, 500 employees, and a budget of \$9 million to become a world-class institution with more than 13,000 students, more than 1,700 employees, and an annual budget of \$168 million; and

WHEREAS, after his retirement as president, Ron Carrier continued to serve James Madison University as chancellor from 1998 to 2002, when he was named president emeritus; he also offered his leadership and wisdom to the Logistics Management Institute, the Romanian-American University, Fortune 500 companies, and other civic and service organizations; and

WHEREAS, Ron Carrier received many awards and accolades for his lifetime of service, including multiple honorary doctorates, and James Madison University's Carrier Library was renamed in his and his wife's honor in 1984; and

WHEREAS, predeceased by a son, Michael, Ron Carrier will be fondly remembered and greatly missed by his wife, Edith; daughters, Linda and Jennine, and their families; and numerous other family members, friends, colleagues, and former students; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the Senate of Virginia hereby note with great sadness the loss of Ronald E. Carrier, a titan of higher education who left behind a legacy of excellence to the James Madison University community and the entire Commonwealth; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the family of Ronald E. Carrier as an expression of the Senate of Virginia's respect for his memory.

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