

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 971

Celebrating the life of President George Herbert Walker Bush.

Agreed to by the House of Delegates, February 18, 2019
Agreed to by the Senate, February 21, 2019

WHEREAS, President George Herbert Walker Bush, a consummate public servant and a respected statesman who was defined by his pragmatic leadership and unparalleled commitment to the American people, died on November 30, 2018; and

WHEREAS, born in Massachusetts to former Senator Prescott Bush and Dorothy Walker Bush, George H.W. Bush grew up in Greenwich, Connecticut, and began to hone his leadership skills at a young age, serving as class president and captain of baseball and soccer teams in high school; and

WHEREAS, after the attack on Pearl Harbor, George H.W. Bush joined many of the other young men of his generation in service to the nation, enlisting in the United States Naval Reserve in 1942 on his 18th birthday; he was assigned to a torpedo squadron as a photographic officer and went on to become one of the youngest aviators in the United States Navy during World War II; and

WHEREAS, during an attack against Chichi Jima, a heavily fortified island held by Japanese forces, the aircraft George H.W. Bush was flying was damaged by Japanese anti-aircraft fire; he courageously released his payload against his target before ejecting from the aircraft and evaded capture by enemy forces; and

WHEREAS, George H.W. Bush served the United States honorably as a naval pilot during World War II, logging 1,228 hours of flight time, 126 carrier landings, and 58 combat missions, for which he was awarded the United States Navy Air Medal with two gold stars and the Distinguished Flying Cross for bravery in action; and

WHEREAS, on January 6, 1945, George H.W. Bush married the love of his life and best friend, Barbara Pierce, and their marriage lasted 73 years, the longest presidential marriage in the history of the United States; and

WHEREAS, while enrolled at Yale University following World War II, George H.W. Bush played in two College World Series games as a left-handed first baseman and met Babe Ruth before graduating in 1948 with a degree in economics and moving to Texas with Barbara and his eldest son, George W. Bush; and

WHEREAS, upon moving to West Texas, George H.W. Bush became a successful businessman, establishing himself in the oil and gas industry until 1966, when he was elected to the House of Representatives, where he ably represented the residents of the 7th District of Texas for two terms; and

WHEREAS, George H.W. Bush served as United States Ambassador to the United Nations from 1971 to 1973, which led to his appointment in 1974 as Chief of the United States Liaison Office in the People's Republic of China, where he greatly improved relations between the United States and China during his 14-month tenure; and

WHEREAS, in 1976, President Gerald Ford appointed George H.W. Bush to serve as the Director of the Central Intelligence Agency, where he worked to improve agency morale; and

WHEREAS, George H.W. Bush served as Vice President of the United States for eight years under President Ronald Reagan, managing federal deregulation, championing anti-drug efforts, combating terrorism, and leading North Atlantic Treaty Organization negotiations during the Cold War; and

WHEREAS, in 1988, the people of the United States elected George H.W. Bush to serve as the 41st President of the United States; he became the first serving Vice President to be elected President since 1836 and he was the last veteran of World War II elected to the nation's highest office; and

WHEREAS, President George H.W. Bush worked closely with his international counterparts throughout his Presidency and oversaw the end of the Cold War, the fall of the Berlin Wall, and the reunification of Germany, and worked with Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev to sign two treaties reducing the threat of nuclear war; and

WHEREAS, President George H.W. Bush upheld the reputation of the United States as the leader of the free world, protecting the Panama Canal from a corrupt regime, assembling a multinational force to compel the withdrawal of Iraq from Kuwait in the Persian Gulf War, and convening the Madrid Peace Conference in 1991; and

WHEREAS, the efforts of President George H.W. Bush to negotiate the North American Free Trade Agreement led to the adoption of that agreement in 1993; and

WHEREAS, President George H.W. Bush worked with Congress to enact the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and Public Law 101-549, commonly known as the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990; he also hosted an education summit with governors from all 50 states in the pursuit of systemic

education reform and capped discretionary spending that led to historic deficit cuts; and

WHEREAS, President George H.W. Bush appointed Justice Clarence Thomas and Justice David Souter to the Supreme Court of the United States; and

WHEREAS, President George H.W. Bush believed "there could be no definition of a successful life that does not include service to others" and therefore launched the Points of Light initiative to promote volunteerism and community service across America and, while in office, awarded 1,020 Daily Points of Light to Americans representing all 50 states; and

WHEREAS, after leaving office, President George H.W. Bush remained dedicated to volunteerism and community service, raising hundreds of millions of dollars for charity; and

WHEREAS, President George H.W. Bush inspired his sons, the 43rd President of the United States and former Governor of Texas George W. Bush and former Governor of Florida Jeb Bush, to follow in his footsteps as public servants; and

WHEREAS, in 1999, the Central Intelligence Agency headquarters in Langley was named the George Bush Center for Intelligence in his honor, and in 2009, the USS *George H.W. Bush*, a United States naval supercarrier, was commissioned with the Motto "Freedom at Work"; and

WHEREAS, President George H.W. Bush accepted the Presidential Medal of Freedom on February 15, 2011, from President Barack Obama; and

WHEREAS, President George H.W. Bush never lost his zest for life and his zeal for adventure, commemorating his 75th, 80th, 85th, and 90th birthdays with parachute jumps; and

WHEREAS, predeceased by his wife, Barbara, and his daughter, Robin, President George H.W. Bush is fondly remembered and greatly missed by his five children, 17 grandchildren, and eight great-grandchildren, and numerous other family members, friends, and colleagues; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly hereby note with great sadness the loss of President George Herbert Walker Bush, the 41st President of the United States; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the family of President George Herbert Walker Bush as an expression of the General Assembly's respect for his memory and admiration for his incredible legacy of excellence in public service.