

## SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 409

*Celebrating the life of Roy Linwood Clark.*

Agreed to by the Senate, February 18, 2019  
Agreed to by the House of Delegates, February 19, 2019

WHEREAS, Roy Linwood Clark, Grammy award-winning country musician and philanthropist, died on November 15, 2018; and

WHEREAS, Roy Clark was born in Meherrin, Virginia, and moved to Washington, D.C., when he was young; his father played in a square dance band and exposed his son to a wide variety of music through trips to see the National Symphony Orchestra, various military band concerts, and numerous other concerts; and

WHEREAS, with a strong music foundation, Roy Clark began playing tunes on a banjo and mandolin; as a 14-year-old, he got a Sears Silvertone guitar, and that same year, he made his first television appearance; he was 15 when he earned \$2 in his first paid performance in his father's band; and

WHEREAS, starting out, Roy Clark began playing his instruments in the fertile, diverse musical soil of cosmopolitan Washington, D.C., at bars and dives on Friday and Saturday nights until he was playing every night; and

WHEREAS, Roy Clark soon went on tour with country legends such as Hank Williams and Grandpa Jones; after winning a national banjo competition in 1950, he was invited to perform at the Grand Ole Opry, which led to shows with Red Foley and Ernest Tubb; and

WHEREAS, in his early career, Roy Clark would often return to Washington, D.C., to play not only country but jazz, pop, and early rock and roll; known for his showmanship, he would play fast, and even play with his feet; and

WHEREAS, in 1954 Roy Clark joined Jimmy Dean and the Texas Wildcats, appearing in clubs and on radio and television, and even backing up Elvis Presley; at 27 an invitation to open for Wanda Jackson at the Golden Nugget in Las Vegas proved to be his big break, leading to his own tour; and

WHEREAS, on the road for 345 straight nights at one stretch, when Roy Clark returned to Las Vegas in 1962, he came back as a headliner and recording star with his debut album *The Lightning Fingers of Roy Clark*; the next year he had his first hit, *The Tips of My Fingers*; and

WHEREAS, Roy Clark co-hosted *Hee Haw* and made appearances on television shows *American Bandstand*, *The Tonight Show*, and variety shows, always with a smile and a sense of humor; and

WHEREAS, Roy Clark was best known for the song *Yesterday When I Was Young*; he had 23 Top 40 country hits, among them eight Top 10s: *The Tips of My Fingers*, *Yesterday When I Was Young*, *I Never Picked Cotton*, *Thank God and Greyhound You're Gone*, *The Lawrence Welk-Hee Haw Counter Revolution Polka*, *Come Live With Me*, *Somewhere Between Love and Tomorrow*, and *If I Had to Do It All Over Again*; his 12-string guitar rendition of *Malaguena* is considered a classic; and

WHEREAS, Roy Clark won numerous accolades for his work, including a Grammy for best country music instrumental performance for *Alabama Jubilee*, a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame, an Academy of Country Music's Pioneer Award, membership in the Gibson Guitar Hall of Fame, and selection as the 63rd member of the Grand Ole Opry; and

WHEREAS, Roy Clark's groundbreaking friendship tours to the Soviet Union brought country music to appreciative audiences around the world, building people-to-people bridges in the height of the Cold War; and

WHEREAS, throughout Roy Clark's career, philanthropy and his Virginia roots remained important; he regularly returned to Prince Edward County to perform at Longwood University where a scholarship in his name supports music students; and

WHEREAS, Roy Clark will be missed by his wife, Barbara; children, Roy, Michael, Terry Lee, Susan, and Diane, and their families; and numerous other family and friends as well as his legions of fans; 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 Roy Linwood Clark, Grammy award-winning country musician and philanthropist; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the family of Roy Linwood Clark, as an expression of the General Assembly's respect for his music and his memory.