

## SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 23

*Commending Lisa Specter-Dunaway.*

Agreed to by the Senate, February 13, 2020

WHEREAS, Lisa Specter-Dunaway played a pivotal role in the 2019 formation of Families Forward Virginia by negotiating and facilitating the merger of Prevent Child Abuse Virginia, the Comprehensive Health Investment Project of Virginia, and Early Impact Virginia; and

WHEREAS, Families Forward Virginia, a nonprofit organization, is Virginia's leading organization dedicated to disrupting the cycle of child abuse, neglect, and poverty by providing statewide leadership and unifying support for a multitude of evidence-based programs and multi-generational prevention strategies; and

WHEREAS, Families Forward Virginia currently serves approximately 10,000 families in the Commonwealth, with its home-visiting program serving almost 5,700 families by working directly with parents and their children and providing home visitations, positive parenting education, child sexual abuse prevention programs, advocacy, and public education; and

WHEREAS, on November 15, 2017, Lisa Specter-Dunaway was appointed chief executive officer for Families Forward Virginia; and

WHEREAS, prior to the 2019 formation of Families Forward Virginia, Lisa Specter-Dunaway served as chief executive officer of the Comprehensive Health Investment Project (CHIP) of Virginia for 11 years; and

WHEREAS, CHIP of Virginia, now operating as part of the Families Forward array of service models, continues to support children and families through a two-generation approach, which changes lives two generations at a time by pairing families with integrated teams of registered nurses and parent educators; and

WHEREAS, in 2018, Secretary of Education Atif Qarni appointed Lisa Specter-Dunaway to the School Readiness Committee to provide strategic guidance on state-level early childhood policy; and

WHEREAS, Lisa Specter-Dunaway played an integral role in the 2006 establishment of the Virginia Home Visiting Consortium to provide state leadership on improvements in efficiency, quality, resource development, and effectiveness of early childhood home visitation services, which has become a national model for collaborative leadership on those issues; and

WHEREAS, Lisa Specter-Dunaway was appointed to the Family and Children's Trust Fund (FACT) Board in 2010 by Governor Robert McDonnell and served in that capacity through 2018, including as chair of the board from 2015 to 2018; and

WHEREAS, in that role, Lisa Specter-Dunaway used her high-level perspectives on the complex issues related to family violence to provide valuable guidance and direction for FACT, moving the organization forward in new and innovative ways; and

WHEREAS, Lisa Specter-Dunaway continues to work closely with FACT, providing support and partnership in addressing policy and programmatic issues affecting families in Virginia; and

WHEREAS, in 2014, Governor Terry McAuliffe signed Executive Order 22, establishing the Commonwealth Council on Childhood Success to ensure that basic health, education, and child care needs are being met for Virginians under the age of eight, and appointed Lisa Specter-Dunaway to the council; and

WHEREAS, Lisa Specter-Dunaway served as executive director for Smart Smiles, Virginia Alliance of Boys & Girls Clubs, ensuring that low-income children with limited oral health care were able to access preventive and restorative care; and

WHEREAS, Lisa Specter-Dunaway served as deputy director for Youth Matters, Greater Richmond Chamber of Commerce, using her leadership skills to improve the health and safety of children in the Richmond area; and

WHEREAS, in preparation for a career devoted to improving the lives of low-income children and families, Lisa Specter-Dunaway earned a bachelor's degree in psychology from the University of Virginia and a master's degree with a concentration in nonprofit management, from L. Douglas Wilder School of Government and Public Affairs at Virginia Commonwealth University; and

WHEREAS, by dedicating her career to strengthening families and protecting children in Virginia, Lisa Specter-Dunaway has contributed to improving the lives of the Commonwealth's most vulnerable families and young children; and

WHEREAS, through her tireless efforts in influencing policy and expanding services to meet the needs of the future, Lisa Specter-Dunaway has contributed to developing and strengthening a comprehensive support system for young families in the Commonwealth; and

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WHEREAS, Lisa Specter-Dunaway is the epitome of a servant-leader, who has dedicated her career to strengthening families and protecting children in the Commonwealth with the utmost integrity and capability, engendering the respect of her colleagues and her clientele, and the loyalty of her staff; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate of Virginia, That Lisa Specter-Dunaway hereby be commended for her service to the Commonwealth and its citizens; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to Lisa Specter-Dunaway as an expression of the Senate of Virginia's admiration for her legacy of leadership and unparalleled contributions to children and families in Virginia.