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HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 519

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Celebrating the life of Frederick Antony Ravi Kumar Zacharias.

Patron—Freitas

WHEREAS, Frederick Antony Ravi Kumar Zacharias, a prolific author and admired religious scholar who touched countless lives as founder of Ravi Zacharias International Ministries, died on May 19, 2020; and

WHEREAS, a native of India, Ravi Zacharias grew up in Delhi, where he was once told that he would never travel far in his lifetime; after attempting suicide as a teenager, he found strength in his Christian faith and resolved to inspire others to do the same throughout the world; and

WHEREAS, in 1966, Ravi Zacharias immigrated to Canada with his family and subsequently graduated from Ontario Bible College; in the summer of 1971, he traveled to Vietnam, where he ministered to United States soldiers, as well as to captive members of the Viet Cong; and

WHEREAS, the value of Ravi Zacharias' experiences in Vietnam would later become the foundation of his commitment to ministry in areas of high risk, such as Nigeria, Pakistan, North Africa, South Africa, the Middle East, and Russia shortly after the fall of the Soviet Union; and

WHEREAS, Ravi Zacharias relocated to the United States, where he earned a master's degree from Trinity International University in Illinois, then embarked upon several years of travel, teaching and preaching to communities throughout the country; and

WHEREAS, gaining the attention of the Reverend Billy Graham, Ravi Zacharias was invited to speak at the inaugural International Conference for Itinerant Evangelists in 1983 and shared his perspectives on the importance of respecting the worldviews of others to facilitate better understanding of the Gospel message; and

WHEREAS, the following year, Ravi Zacharias founded Ravi Zacharias International Ministries (RZIM) near Atlanta, Georgia, with a mission to defend the intellectual credibility of Christianity and help individuals seek truth on questions of the origins and meaning of life, morality, and destiny; the organization expanded to locations in 17 countries on five continents and grew to employ nearly 100 speakers; and

WHEREAS, over the course of his career, Ravi Zacharias earned several honorary doctorates and authored numerous popular books on Christian philosophy and apologetics, which have been translated into multiple languages; his long-running radio program *Let My People Think* is syndicated to 2,000 stations in 32 countries and has achieved millions of downloads as a podcast; and

WHEREAS, in 2004, Ravi Zacharias and RZIM expanded training opportunities through the creation of the Oxford Centre for Christian Apologetics, which has served hundreds of students from 50 countries, and launched a humanitarian outreach division, Wellspring International, which works with local partners to meet the needs of vulnerable women and children around the world; and

WHEREAS, Ravi Zacharias established the RZIM Academy online learning program in 2014 and the Zacharias Institute training facility in 2017 to continue to inspire and empower believers; and

WHEREAS, Ravi Zacharias will be fondly remembered and greatly missed by his wife of 48 years, Margie; his children, Sarah, Naomi, and Nathan, and their families; and numerous other family members and friends; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the House of Delegates hereby note with great sadness the loss of Frederick Antony Ravi Kumar Zacharias, a religious scholar who touched many lives in the Commonwealth and throughout the United States and the world; 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 Frederick Antony Ravi Kumar Zacharias as an expression of the House of Delegates' respect for his memory.

INTRODUCED

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