

2020 SPECIAL SESSION I

INTRODUCED

20200216D

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 521

Offered August 20, 2020

Commending Ira Agricola.

Patrons—DeSteph, Cosgrove, Kiggans, Lewis, Locke, Lucas, Mason, Norment and Spruill

WHEREAS, in 2020, Ira Agricola retired as executive vice president for government affairs of the Hampton Roads Chamber of Commerce after 39 years of diligent work to support local businesses and enhance the quality of life throughout the community; and

WHEREAS, a Portsmouth native, Ira Agricola worked in city government while completing his bachelor's degree in community services from Virginia Commonwealth University; he began his association with the Portsmouth Chamber of Commerce in 1981 while the city was in the process of applying for the All-America City Award from the National Civic League; and

WHEREAS, in 1984, after five local chambers merged to form the Hampton Roads Chamber of Commerce, Ira Agricola assumed the responsibility of overseeing the executive directors of each division and coordinating public policy initiatives at the local, state, and federal levels; and

WHEREAS, over the course of his distinguished career, Ira Agricola adapted to significant growth and change in the region, as well as shifts in business practices and legislative environments, and became known as the "Voice of Business in Hampton Roads" for his commitment to ensuring that all businesses had the tools and support they needed to thrive; and

WHEREAS, among his many achievements, Ira Agricola increased the economic vitality of Virginia Beach by supporting many notable public-private partnerships, including the Virginia Beach Town Center, the Hilton Virginia Beach Oceanfront adjacent to Neptune's Park, and the sand replenishment project at Sandbridge; and

WHEREAS, Ira Agricola worked with the Portsmouth Police Department and the television station WVEC 13 to establish a Crime Solvers program in the area in the early 1980s; the program succeeded in making the community safer and remains active throughout the Hampton Roads region; and

WHEREAS, Ira Agricola helped secure critical funding to support the purchase of property between Naval Auxiliary Landing Field Fentress and Naval Air Station Oceana to comply with the recommendations of the Base Realignment and Closure Commission; and

WHEREAS, Ira Agricola also established the Virginia Beach Patriotic Festival, a concert series that pays tribute to members of the military and has generated an estimated \$23 million economic impact for the city; and

WHEREAS, after his well-earned retirement, Ira Agricola will continue to serve as chair of the Virginia Beach Patriotic Festival and enjoy more opportunities to spend time with his beloved family; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate of Virginia, That Ira Agricola hereby be commended on the occasion of his retirement from the Hampton Roads Chamber of Commerce; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to Ira Agricola as an expression of the Senate of Virginia's admiration for his legacy of service to the Hampton Roads business community.

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