

2021 SESSION

ENROLLED

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 565

Celebrating the life of the Honorable Augustus Benton Chafin, Jr.

Agreed to by the House of Delegates, January 18, 2021

Agreed to by the Senate, January 21, 2021

WHEREAS, the Honorable Augustus Benton Chafin, Jr., a passionate advocate for Southwest Virginia and an accomplished state legislator who earned bipartisan admiration for his commitment to the betterment of the Commonwealth as a whole, died on January 1, 2021; and

WHEREAS, a proud native of Russell County, Augustus Benton "Ben" Chafin, Jr., grew up on his family's farm and learned the value of hard work and responsibility at a young age; he worked at a local meat packing plant as a teenager, and he returned home most weekends while attending college to help on the farm; and

WHEREAS, a first-generation college student in his family, Ben Chafin received a bachelor's degree from East Tennessee State University and a law degree from the University of Richmond; and

WHEREAS, Ben Chafin established what is now Chafin Law Firm, P.C., in the 1980s and practiced law throughout Southwest Virginia for more than 30 years; in addition to his work as an attorney, he served on the board of First Bank & Trust Company and held close to his roots in agriculture as the owner and operator of a beef cattle farm; and

WHEREAS, desirous to be of further service to his community and to the Commonwealth, Ben Chafin ran for and was elected to the Virginia House of Delegates in 2013, becoming the first Republican to represent the Fourth District in more than 20 years; and

WHEREAS, Ben Chafin was subsequently elected to the Senate of Virginia during a special election in 2014 and ably served the residents of Southwest Virginia in the 38th District until the time of his passing; and

WHEREAS, Ben Chafin adapted to the unique challenges of representing a district that is geographically larger than some federal congressional districts, encompassing all of the Counties of Bland, Buchanan, Dickenson, Pulaski, Russell, and Tazewell; parts of the Counties of Montgomery, Smyth, and Wise; and the Cities of Norton and Radford; and

WHEREAS, during his tenure as a state lawmaker, Ben Chafin introduced and supported many pieces of important legislation to benefit all Virginians and provided his expertise to the Agriculture, Conservation and Natural Resources; Commerce and Labor; Education and Health; Judiciary; Privileges and Elections; and Rehabilitation and Social Services committees; and

WHEREAS, Ben Chafin was a staunch proponent of public education, responsible economic growth, Second Amendment rights, and access to health care for all Virginians; and

WHEREAS, Ben Chafin consistently supported job creation in his district, helping to establish the InvestSWVA partnership to promote the coalfields region as a future site of renewable energy infrastructure and high-technology business development; and

WHEREAS, Ben Chafin served the residents of Southwest Virginia and the entire Commonwealth with the utmost dedication, integrity, and distinction; and

WHEREAS, outside of his careers, Ben Chafin was an avid outdoorsman, who relished every opportunity to appreciate Southwest Virginia's natural splendor; he volunteered his time and leadership as former president of the Russell County Rotary Club; and he enjoyed fellowship and worship with the congregation of Gracewood Community Church in Lebanon; and

WHEREAS, Ben Chafin will be fondly remembered and greatly missed by his wife of 38 years, Lora; his children, Sophia, Audra, Augustus III, and their families; 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 the Honorable Augustus Benton Chafin, Jr., a respected statesman and a champion for Southwest Virginia; 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 Augustus Benton Chafin, Jr., as an expression of the General Assembly's respect for his memory.

ENROLLED

HJ565ER