

# 2021 SPECIAL SESSION I

ENROLLED

## HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 695

*Commending Annie Laura Downing.*

Agreed to by the House of Delegates, February 4, 2021  
Agreed to by the Senate, February 11, 2021

WHEREAS, Annie Laura Downing, a highly admired member of the Richmond community, celebrated her 100th birthday on January 31, 2021; and

WHEREAS, Annie Laura Downing was born in Fairmount near Richmond and was the oldest child of Mary Sharp and John Richards Gentry; and

WHEREAS, Annie Laura Downing attended Glen Lea Elementary School with her siblings, Elizabeth and John, and was a member of Maple Grove Methodist Episcopal Church South in her youth; and

WHEREAS, in 1938, Annie Laura Downing graduated from Highland Springs High School and enrolled in Smithdeal-Massey Business School; she subsequently worked for Henrico County as a switchboard operator and was later promoted to Secretary to the County Manager; and

WHEREAS, in 1941, Annie Laura Downing married Robert "Pete" Roop, and they had three sons, Robert, Richard, and Ronald, and one daughter, Martha Ann; and

WHEREAS, in 1950, Annie Laura Downing and her family moved to Highland Springs, joining Highland Springs United Methodist Church; her compassion and deep faith led her to join the United Methodist Women to help the less fortunate; and

WHEREAS, in 1966, following the loss of her beloved husband, Pete, Annie Laura Downing supported her children by working at Woody Funeral Home on Laburnum Avenue; and

WHEREAS, in 1969, while vacationing with a friend, Annie Laura Downing was introduced to Charlie Downing of Indiana, and after a long-distance courtship, the couple married in 1973 and spent the next 13 years in Indiana; and

WHEREAS, after Charlie retired, Annie Laura Downing returned to Virginia and settled in Mechanicsville, where she joined Shady Grove United Methodist Church; and

WHEREAS, Annie Laura Downing has been active with the Highland Springs Garden Club and the Rural Point Homemakers Club, and she is a devoted member of the Shady Grove United Methodist Women, having served as vice president and spiritual life coordinator; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commend Annie Laura Downing on the occasion of her 100th birthday; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to Annie Laura Downing as an expression of the General Assembly's admiration for her achievements in service to her community and the Commonwealth.

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