

2021 SPECIAL SESSION I

ENROLLED

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 703

Celebrating the life of William Walker Byers, Jr.

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

WHEREAS, William Walker Byers, Jr., a veteran and member of the Charlottesville community, died on September 6, 2020, at the age of 74; and

WHEREAS, William "Bill" Walker Byers, Jr., was born in Charlottesville in 1946, graduated from Jackson P. Burley High School in 1964, and earned an associate's degree in auto mechanics from Virginia State University in 1966 and a bachelor's degree in health education and recreation from Norfolk State College in 1975; he was a member of the Gamma Alpha Lambda chapter of the Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc.; and

WHEREAS, Bill Byers served in the United States Army from 1966 through 1972, including tours of duty in Vietnam, and was honorably discharged as a specialist (fourth class); he later co-founded the Veterans Committee of Central Virginia and was a strong advocate for local veterans, helping to organize an annual commemoration of the history and experiences of African Americans in the military; and

WHEREAS, Bill Byers helped to teach countless members of the Charlottesville community to swim, having taught aquatics and water safety in the Charlottesville City Schools from 1976 until 2006; he held the position of pool manager and swim instructor for the Charlottesville Department of Parks and Recreation from 1974 until 2014; and

WHEREAS, Bill Byers served the community in many other ways and delighted local children through his seasonal appearances dressed as Santa Claus; and

WHEREAS, Bill Byers served on the Board of Directors of the American Red Cross in Charlottesville, where he was an instructor for lifeguarding, CPR, first aid, risk management, and water safety; and

WHEREAS, Bill Byers was featured in the documentary *A Legacy Unbroken: The Story of Black Charlottesville*, in which he spoke about his early days as a caretaker at Washington Park; and

WHEREAS, on September 3, 1983, Bill Byers married Mary Wyatt Byers, and they had two children, Anita Elizabeth Byers and William "Billy" Walker Byers III, all of whom continue to treasure his memory; and

WHEREAS, Bill Byers was passionate about classic cars, especially Corvettes, and delighted in owning four of them; and

WHEREAS, Bill Byers will be fondly remembered by his family members and friends and by the many people whose lives were touched through his commitment to service; 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 William Walker Byers, Jr., a veteran and member of the Charlottesville community; 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 William Walker Byers, Jr., as an expression of the General Assembly's respect for his memory.

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