

# 2021 SPECIAL SESSION I

ENROLLED

## HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 719

*Commending Joe Szakos.*

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

WHEREAS, Joe Szakos, longtime community organizer and advocate and founding executive director of Virginia Organizing, retired in 2020; and

WHEREAS, Joe Szakos earned a master's degree from the University of Chicago's School of Social Service Administration in 1979, preparing him to be an effective agent of change for communities in need; and

WHEREAS, Joe Szakos was the founding coordinator of Kentuckians For The Commonwealth, helping countless working-class families improve their lives through land reform and environmental justice initiatives and other programs; and

WHEREAS, from 1994 to 2017, Joe Szakos was the founding executive director of Virginia Organizing, leading the influential grassroots organization in its efforts to combat injustice and empower communities in the Commonwealth; and

WHEREAS, along with his wife, Kristin Layng Szakos, Joe Szakos coauthored *We Make Change: Community Organizers Talk About What They Do—and Why*, published by Vanderbilt University Press in 2007, to inform and inspire future generations of community organizers; and

WHEREAS, in the final years of his career, Joe Szakos served Virginia Organizing as its Lynchburg chapter organizer, extending his exceptional expertise as a community organizer to new corners of the Commonwealth; and

WHEREAS, through his tireless dedication to the prosperity and well-being of others, Joe Szakos has served as an inspiration to all Virginians and a reminder of why the Commonwealth is a wonderful place to live, work, and play; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commend Joe Szakos, founding executive director of Virginia Organizing, on the occasion of his retirement; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to Joe Szakos as an expression of the General Assembly's admiration for his service to the citizens of the Commonwealth.

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