

2021 SPECIAL SESSION II

INTRODUCED

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HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 809

Offered August 4, 2021

Commending Terry Daniels Smusz.

Patron—Rush

WHEREAS, on June 30, 2021, Terry Daniels Smusz retired as chief executive officer of New River Community Action after more than 32 years of service, having led the organization for almost two-thirds of its 56-year history; and

WHEREAS, in the 1990s, under the leadership of Terry Smusz, New River Community Action worked with local day care centers to provide free child care, expanded the Children's Health Improvement Partnership (CHIP), started the Homeless Intervention Program, and opened the Floyd Family Resource Center; and

WHEREAS, in the 2000s, Terry Smusz directed New River Community Action to establish the VIRGINIA CARES program to assist newly released ex-offenders and their families in making a successful transition from prison to their community, the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance program to provide free basic income tax return preparation, and the To Our House thermal shelter for homeless adults, which has connected those individuals with resources to help them achieve employment, housing, and personal economic sustainability; and

WHEREAS, Terry Smusz developed a partnership with Total Action for Progress to provide the Swift Start program that helps working parents secure jobs with higher wages by providing skill development in health care, advanced manufacturing, and information technology fields, along with access to affordable, quality childcare and expanded Head Start programs; and

WHEREAS, more recently, Terry Smusz helped New River Community Action become one of six Virginia community action agencies participating in the Virginia Two-Generation Whole Family Pilot Project that seeks to use comprehensive case management and coordinated, focused agency service delivery to address the needs of an entire family, rather than individual members of the family; and

WHEREAS, during Terry Smusz's tenure, New River Community Action started the 24/7 Homeless Hotline, served as the local administrator for the Virginia Rent and Mortgage Relief Program, which is designed to support and ensure housing stability across the Commonwealth during the COVID-19 pandemic, and maintained other critical programs and services through remote assistance during the COVID-19 pandemic; and

WHEREAS, Terry Smusz received the special Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) network leadership award, the Ann Kagie CSBG Award, which was presented by the National Association for State Community Services Programs Board to recognize her outstanding and significant contributions to the CSBG program, her dedication and commitment to the constituencies served by the network, and her leadership and advocacy for the network; and

WHEREAS, Terry Smusz was the co-recipient of the 2021 Mark Grigsby Selfless Leadership Award presented by the Virginia Community Action Partnership; and

WHEREAS, working in partnership with the New River Community Action board of directors and supported by the hard work of countless volunteers, staff members, and partner organizations, Terry Smusz has helped New River Community Action fulfill its mission to provide "a hand up, not a hand out" and help diverse communities in the Counties of Floyd, Giles, Montgomery, and Pulaski and the City of Radford identify and alleviate the causes of poverty; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, That Terry Daniels Smusz hereby be commended on the occasion of her well-deserved retirement as chief executive officer of New River Community Action; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to Terry Daniels Smusz as an expression of the House of Delegates' admiration for her years of dedicated service to the residents of the New River Valley.

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