

22105448D

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 220

Offered February 14, 2022

Celebrating the life of Lorraine Paula Austin.

Patrons—Simonds and Mullin

WHEREAS, Lorraine Paula Austin, co-founder of Habitat for Humanity Peninsula and Greater Williamsburg and a pillar of the Newport News community, died on July 29, 2021; and

WHEREAS, Lorraine Austin grew up in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, and would go on to graduate from Bucknell University and earn a master's degree from the University of Pennsylvania; and

WHEREAS, upon arriving in Newport News, Lorraine Austin began what ultimately became a lifetime of service to her community, working first as a teacher before the birth of her children, Larry and Dan; and

WHEREAS, in 1985, Lorraine Austin and her husband, Ed, along with others, founded Habitat for Humanity Peninsula and Greater Williamsburg, and she served as the organization's first executive director and its inspirational leader; and

WHEREAS, running Habitat for Humanity Peninsula and Greater Williamsburg from her home, Lorraine Austin did everything from fundraising to construction; the organization built its first home in 1986 and to date has built more than 200 new homes and helped repair over 300 homes; and

WHEREAS, Lorraine Austin acquired a number of awards and accolades during her time with Habitat for Humanity; she was recognized by the former Virginia Peninsula Community Housing Resource Board for outstanding contributions in fair housing, awarded the J.C. Penney Golden Rule Award in 1990, named *The Daily Press* Citizen of the Year in 1992, and inducted into the honorary Omicron Delta Kappa Society in 1996; and

WHEREAS, Lorraine Austin volunteered for the Democratic Party of Virginia, specifically with the goal to increase voter turnout, and she dedicated innumerable hours to ensuring voters in her community had their voices heard; and

WHEREAS, committed to the growth and development of her community, Lorraine Austin was appointed to the Newport News Planning Commission in 2010 and served two consecutive terms, advancing various initiatives to guide Newport News toward a brighter and more prosperous future; and

WHEREAS, Lorraine Austin earned the designation of Virginia Master Naturalist and was an active member of her chapter, volunteering over 100 hours in 2020 as she served on the basic training committee and oversaw responsibilities such as water quality testing, migratory bird counts, stewardship of the Mariner's Museum and Park and Noland Trail in Newport News, and leadership of the Community Collaborative Rain, Hail and Snow Network project; and

WHEREAS, Lorraine Austin was a lifelong learner who constantly sought new opportunities to help others; following her mother's experience in hospice care, she was inspired to help her mother's caregiver establish her own business, I AM Companion Home Care, LLC, and served on the company's board; and

WHEREAS, in addition to her volunteerism and activism, Lorraine Austin was a Stephen Minister and served as a deacon and elder at Hidenwood Presbyterian Church in Newport News, while pursuing interests such as studying Hebrew and Greek, playing the guitar and piano, and singing in multiple choirs; and

WHEREAS, joined in death by her husband, Ed, Lorraine Austin will be fondly remembered and dearly missed by her sons, Larry and Dan, and their families, and by numerous other family members and friends; 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 Lorraine Austin, a pillar of the Newport News community whose free, yet unfaltering, spirit left an impact that can be felt in countless ways; 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 Lorraine Austin as an expression of the General Assembly's respect for her memory.

INTRODUCED

HJ220