

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 232

Commending Dr. James Wade Gilley.

Agreed to by the House of Delegates, February 21, 2022
 Agreed to by the Senate, February 24, 2022

WHEREAS, Dr. James Wade Gilley, a former Virginia Secretary of Education, touched countless lives through his outstanding achievements as a higher education administrator; and

WHEREAS, a native of Grayson County, James Gilley graduated from Fries High School, where he received 11 letters in football, basketball, and baseball; and

WHEREAS, James Gilley earned bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees in civil engineering from Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (Virginia Tech) and was a founding member of the institution's Indian American College Fund; and

WHEREAS, James Gilley served as an associate professor of engineering at his alma mater, and subsequently served as president of Wytheville Community College, Reynolds Community College, and Bluefield State College; and

WHEREAS, in the 1970s, James Gilley was a Kellogg Fellow at the Institute for Higher Education at the University of Florida and earned a postdoctoral certificate at the Institute for Educational Management at Harvard University; and

WHEREAS, after serving the Commonwealth as acting state superintendent of schools, James Gilley was appointed as the Secretary of Education under Governor John N. Dalton from 1978 to 1982; in that capacity, he played a major role in the Commonwealth's higher education desegregation plan and supported historically Black colleges and universities; and

WHEREAS, James Gilley maintained his focus on increasing diversity in higher education and became a senior vice president of George Mason University from 1982 until 1991, when he was selected as the 15th president of Marshall University; and

WHEREAS, during James Gilley's tenure as president, Marshall University awarded its first doctoral degree, merged with West Virginia Graduate School to create the Marshall University Graduate College, completed a \$250 million campus renewal project, was honored by the United States Department of Labor for its commitment to excellence in affirmative action, and experienced unprecedented success in athletics, with the football team winning its first bowl game in 1998; and

WHEREAS, James Gilley proudly oversaw the dedication of the John D. Drinko Library and a statue of John Marshall, the most prominent landmark on campus; and

WHEREAS, James Gilley next served as the 20th president of the University of Tennessee at Knoxville from 1999 to 2001; and

WHEREAS, James Gilley earned national recognition for his unwavering commitment to diversity and equity on college campuses and was selected as one of the most influential college presidents of the 20th century by *Black Issues in Higher Education*; and

WHEREAS, after retiring from higher education, James Gilley served as a senior partner of Strategic Initiatives in Herndon, and co-owner of Reston-Dulles Properties in Reston, where he resides with his beloved wife Nan; and

WHEREAS, highly respected for his expertise, James Gilley has authored 16 books, including fiction and nonfiction works, and numerous articles in professional journals, newspapers, and publications around the world; and

WHEREAS, James Gilley worked to advance the field of higher education with the utmost dedication, integrity, and distinction, and he touched countless lives throughout the Commonwealth and surrounding states; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commend Dr. James Wade Gilley for his lifetime of leadership in higher education; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to Dr. James Wade Gilley as an expression of the General Assembly's admiration for his personal and professional achievements.

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