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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 312

Offered February 28, 2022

Celebrating the life of Charles St. Clair Brown.

Patrons—Hope; Senators: Ebbin and Howell

WHEREAS, Charles St. Clair Brown, an esteemed attorney and disability rights advocate and a beloved member of the Arlington and Winchester communities, died on August 1, 2021; and

WHEREAS, legally blind from birth, Charles "Charlie" St. Clair Brown was the first blind graduate of Wellesley High School in Wellesley, Massachusetts, and later earned a bachelor's degree from Harvard University and a juris doctor degree from Northwestern University; and

WHEREAS, passing the Illinois and Connecticut bars in 1970, Charlie Brown took a position with the Legislation and Legal Counsel Division of the Office of the Solicitor of the United States Department of Labor (DOL), rising through the ranks to ultimately become the division's counsel for special legal services; and

WHEREAS, during his tenure with DOL, Charlie Brown oversaw and drafted proposed legislation, prepared Congressional testimony and internal directives for the department, served as counsel to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, managed the department's ethics and financial disclosure program, and facilitated the United States Senate confirmation of numerous officials; for his efforts, he was awarded DOL's Distinguished Career Service award in 1982; and

WHEREAS, Charlie Brown was appointed the designated agency ethics official at the National Science Foundation (NSF) in 1991, taking on the responsibility of writing and implementing NSF regulations related to conflicts of interest and financial disclosure requirements; in recognition of his work to safeguard the integrity of NSF's peer-review process, he earned NSF's Gold Medal award in 2006; and

WHEREAS, following his retirement from the United States Government in 2007, Charlie Brown opened a private practice in Washington, D.C., and later in Winchester, where he applied his extensive legal experience in the areas of disability rights, voting rights, and nonprofit administration; and

WHEREAS, dedicated to the legal profession and promoting access for disabled individuals, Charlie Brown served on the American Bar Association's Commission on Disability Rights and its Standing Committee on Election Law and was a founding board member of the Disability Rights Bar Association, while holding various offices in the National Association of Blind Lawyers; and

WHEREAS, Charlie Brown's advocacy for the disabled included a longstanding role with the National Federation of the Blind (NFB), as he served as the Virginia chapter president for 26 years and was both a member of the national organization's board of directors and its treasurer; in recognition of his extraordinary efforts, he was presented with NFB's most prestigious honor, the Jacobus tenBroek Award; and

WHEREAS, an active and engaged member of the community, Charlie Brown was involved with the Kiwanis Club of Arlington, which he served as president, sat on the Virginia Community Integration Advisory Commission, and was president of the Virginia Business Opportunities for the Blind, Inc.; and

WHEREAS, guided throughout his life by his faith, Charlie Brown enjoyed worship and fellowship with his community at Rock Spring Congregational Church in Arlington for many years, serving in various leadership positions both with the church and the United Church Board for Homeland Ministries; and

WHEREAS, Charlie Brown will be fondly remembered and dearly missed by his loving wife, Jacki; his children, Richard and Stephen, and their families; and 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 Charles St. Clair Brown, an accomplished attorney whose years of advocacy and support affected countless lives; 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 Charles St. Clair Brown as an expression of the General Assembly's respect for his memory.

INTRODUCED

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