

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 16

Celebrating the life of the Honorable Robert Tata.

Agreed to by the House of Delegates, January 27, 2022

WHEREAS, the Honorable Robert Tata of Virginia Beach and Greene County, a devoted educator and coach, highly admired former member of the Virginia House of Delegates, and a beloved father, grandfather, husband, and friend, died on June 11, 2021; and

WHEREAS, a native of Detroit, Michigan, Robert "Bob" Tata learned the value of hard work and responsibility at a young age, working at his father's concrete block business after school and athletic practice; and

WHEREAS, Bob Tata graduated from University of Detroit Jesuit High School and Academy and chose to attend the University of Virginia, where he played football and baseball, earned bachelor's and master's degrees in education, and became a member of the honorary IMP Society; and

WHEREAS, Bob Tata had a successful athletic career at the University of Virginia as a running back for the football team and first baseman for the baseball team, earning All Big Six honors in both sports; he was a collegiate batting champion and played in the North-South Shrine All-Star Football Game; and

WHEREAS, Bob Tata was drafted by the Detroit Lions in the National Football League but was released after sustaining an injury; he returned to the University of Virginia as a graduate student and began working with the football team at Albemarle High School; and

WHEREAS, Bob Tata met his future wife, Jeraldine, at Albemarle High School, where she worked as a business teacher; after they married, the couple traveled to Fort Dugway Proving Grounds, where Bob served his country as a member of the United States Army; and

WHEREAS, Bob and Jeraldine Tata settled in Virginia Beach, where they both worked in local high schools and raised their sons, Robert, Anthony, and Kendall; and

WHEREAS, Bob Tata was voted as the Coach of the Decade for the Tidewater area by the *Virginian-Pilot*, the *Ledger Star*, and the Norfolk and Virginia Beach Sports Clubs for his outstanding mentorship of young men and his stellar record as a football coach; and

WHEREAS, Bob Tata was the inventor of the Tata Track Trainer, a patented method to train athletes to run faster; and

WHEREAS, after teaching and coaching for 32 years, Bob Tata was asked to run for the Virginia House of Delegates by Congressman G. William Whitehurst as a Republican; he defeated the incumbent and embarked on a 30-year career in public service, representing the 85th District from 1984 to 2014; and

WHEREAS, Bob Tata introduced and supported numerous important pieces of legislation to benefit his constituents and all Virginians and offered his leadership and expertise to his colleagues as chair of the House Education Committee; and

WHEREAS, during his tenure as a state lawmaker, Bob Tata was affectionately referred to as "Coach" by his colleagues because of his successful coaching career, natural leadership abilities, and ability to connect with people on a personal level; and

WHEREAS, Bob Tata inspired countless individuals to make a difference in their communities, and before his death, he proudly witnessed his daughter-in-law, the Honorable Anne Ferrell Tata, win the Republican nomination for the 82nd District Virginia House of Delegates seat; and

WHEREAS, after his well-earned retirement, Bob Tata moved to the family Morris-Tata Farm to spend his golden years with his wife, Jeraldine, who preceded him in death; he passed away on what would have been their 66th wedding anniversary; and

WHEREAS, Bob Tata will be fondly remembered and missed by his children, Robert, Anthony, and Kendall, and their families, and numerous other family members, friends, former students and players, and colleagues on both sides of the aisle in the General Assembly; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the House of Delegates hereby note with great sadness the loss of the Honorable Robert Tata, a passionate educator and coach, respected public servant, and dedicated community leader; 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 the Honorable Robert Tata as an expression of the House of Delegates' respect for his memory.