

2022 SESSION

INTRODUCED

22105790D

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 19

Offered February 10, 2022

1 3 *Commending Rita Carter Forrester.*

2
3 Patrons—Hackworth, Pillion, Barker, Bell, Boysko, Chase, Cosgrove, Deeds, DeSteph, Dunnivant,
4 Ebbin, Edwards, Favola, Hanger, Hashmi, Howell, Kiggans, Lewis, Locke, Lucas, Marsden, Mason,
5 McClellan, McDougle, McPike, Morrissey, Newman, Norment, Obenshain, Peake, Petersen, Reeves,
6 Ruff, Saslaw, Spruill, Stanley, Stuart, Suetterlein, Surovell and Vogel

7 6 WHEREAS, Rita Carter Forrester, the granddaughter of two members of one of the most influential
8 folk and country music bands of all time, the Carter Family, has worked diligently to preserve the
9 band's legacy and promote Southwest Virginia's contributions to the American musical landscape; and

10 9 WHEREAS, presented by the General Assembly's Outstanding Virginian Committee in conjunction
11 with The University of Virginia's Frank Batten School of Leadership and Public Policy, the Outstanding
12 Virginian Award is considered the Commonwealth's highest civilian honor and is awarded to citizens,
13 such as Rita Carter Forrester, who have distinguished themselves through extraordinary civic service;
14 and

15 14 WHEREAS, the Carter Family, originally comprised of Sara Carter, her husband, A.P. Carter, and
16 her sister-in-law, Maybelle Carter, became local legends playing at town events, church functions, and
17 house parties in Scott County and throughout Southwest Virginia and became one of the first groups to
18 record commercially produced country music at the famed Bristol Sessions in 1927; and

19 18 WHEREAS, known as "the first family of country music," the members of the Carter Family were
20 highly admired for their exceptional talents, commitment to honing their craft as musicians, and prolific
21 songwriting, and they influenced other performers in a wide range of genres for decades; and

22 21 WHEREAS, in 1979, Janette Carter, daughter of Sara and A.P. Carter, established the Carter Family
23 Fold as a concert venue dedicated to performances of old-time country and bluegrass music; located in
24 what is now Hiltons, the venue has helped preserve traditional musical styles and support local artists,
25 while also welcoming nationally known performers like Johnny Cash; and

26 25 WHEREAS, Rita Carter Forrester, Janette Carter's daughter, has continued to uphold the family
27 legacy of musical preservation and became the executive director of the Carter Family Memorial Music
28 Center, which includes the Carter Family Fold, after her mother's death in 2006; and

29 28 WHEREAS, the Carter Family Memorial Music Center has thrived under Rita Carter Forrester's
30 leadership, with the Carter Family Fold hosting weekly concerts to celebrate traditional Appalachian
31 music and dancing, as well as serving delicious family dishes based on recipes passed down through
32 generations; and

33 32 WHEREAS, in 2009, Rita Carter Forrester presided over a major project to renovate and rededicate
34 the Carter Family Museum, an unparalleled collection of Carter Family memorabilia; and

35 34 WHEREAS, the Carter Family Memorial Music Center also features the restored 1880s cabin where
36 A.P. Carter was born and the organization holds an annual Carter Family Memorial Festival in August;
37 and

38 37 WHEREAS, in addition to her work with the Carter Family Memorial Music Center, Rita Carter
39 Forrester is a full-time employee of her alma mater, East Tennessee State University, as an
40 administrative assistant; she often works long and late hours to ensure that the Carter Family Fold
41 fulfills its mission to serve and enrich the community; and

42 41 WHEREAS, Rita Carter Forrester has shared the joys of the Appalachian mountain lifestyle with
43 visitors from around the Commonwealth, the nation, and the world and ensured that fans of the Carter
44 Family and all music lovers have a place to learn about and appreciate the early roots of country music;
45 now, therefore, be it

46 45 RESOLVED by the Senate of Virginia, That Rita Carter Forrester hereby be commended on her
47 selection as the 2022 Outstanding Virginian for her work to preserve the rich musical heritage of
48 Southwest Virginia as executive director of the Carter Family Memorial Music Center; and, be it

49 48 RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare a copy of this resolution for
50 presentation to Rita Carter Forrester as an expression of the Senate of Virginia's admiration for her
contributions to cultural life in the Commonwealth.

INTRODUCED

SR19