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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 789

Offered February 20, 2023

Celebrating the life of Jayne Francis Gourley Karsten.

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Patrons—Sullivan and Murphy; Senator: Favola

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6 WHEREAS, Jayne Francis Gourley Karsten, an accomplished educator and beloved wife, mother, grandmother, and great-grandmother, whose efforts to develop innovative curriculums over the years enhanced the educational experiences of countless students, died on February 9, 2023; and

9 WHEREAS, born in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, and raised in the Dust Bowl during the Great Depression, Jayne Karsten enjoyed a glamorous career as a dancer in her teenage years, traveling the country with Katheryn Duffy's dance troupe and performing alongside some of the biggest stars of the day; she would go on to share her knowledge of dance throughout her life as both an instructor and choreographer in various settings; and

14 WHEREAS, Jayne Karsten enrolled at the University of Michigan in 1942 and later became the first woman to pursue graduate studies in the university's English department and the first woman to teach in the department, making a connection with the famous playwright Arthur Miller, a classmate of hers, along the way; and

18 WHEREAS, Jayne Karsten was involved with education at both the high school and college levels while moving between Grass Lake, Michigan; Kansas City, Missouri; Chagrin Falls, Ohio; and Westport, Connecticut, where she first taught concurrently at both levels and where she began to create a dynamic, multidisciplinary curriculum around the history of American civilization, an endeavor she would continue to develop alongside professors from some of the country's most prestigious institutions of higher education; and

24 WHEREAS, upon settling in Great Falls in 1972, Jayne Karsten joined the faculty at Langley High School in McLean and began collaborating with fellow teachers to further develop her American civilization curriculum; these efforts led to a new world civilization course and the Seminars on American Reality program, a series that brought students face-to-face with the country's leaders and that would be replicated by other school districts throughout the region; and

29 WHEREAS, after a brief sojourn in Cairo, Egypt, and some time attending graduate programs at the American University of Cairo, Jayne Karsten rejoined the Langley High School faculty and went on to coauthor with members of the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) and the National Archives and Records Administration a primary source history book titled *Our Mothers Before Us: Women and Democracy, 1789-1920*; and

34 WHEREAS, in the 1980s, Jayne Karsten supported the activities of several United States institutions in various capacities, including the NEH as a grants program officer, the Hirshhorn Museum as a member of its design committee, and the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts as a consultant; and

38 WHEREAS, Jayne Karsten concluded her illustrious career as an educator at the Key School in Annapolis, Maryland, working indefatigably for the benefit of her students at the school for more than 25 years before retiring in 2017 at the age of 92; and

41 WHEREAS, preceded in death by her husband, Harold; and her son, Scott; Jayne Karsten will be fondly remembered and dearly missed by her children, Tracey, Jill, and Kurt, and their families, and by numerous other family members and friends; now, therefore, be it

44 RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly hereby note with great sadness the loss of Jayne Francis Gourley Karsten, an exceptional educator who made a profound and lasting impact on the communities of McLean and Annapolis; and, be it

47 RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the family of Jayne Francis Gourley Karsten as an expression of the General Assembly's respect for her memory.