

## 2023 SESSION

ENROLLED

### HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 313

*Commending William Edward Wagner.*

Agreed to by the House of Delegates, February 14, 2023

WHEREAS, William Edward Wagner is a native of the Commonwealth who is celebrated for having one of the most successful pitching careers in the history of Major League Baseball and for giving back to the community through his involvement with the Miller School of Albemarle and the 2nd Chance Learning Center of Southwest Virginia; and

WHEREAS, born and raised in the Marion area, William "Billy" Edward Wagner, a natural right-hander, remarkably taught himself to throw with his left hand after breaking his right arm twice at a young age; and

WHEREAS, Billy Wagner later moved to the Tazewell area and graduated from Tazewell High School, where in his senior season he posted a .451 batting average, 23 stolen bases, 29 runs batted in, 116 strikeouts in 46 innings, a 7-1 pitching record, and a 1.52 earned run average (ERA); and

WHEREAS, Billy Wagner attended Ferrum College to play both football and baseball, but ultimately decided to dedicate himself to the latter; he would increase the speed of his fastball to 95 miles per hour, and in 1992, set National Collegiate Athletic Association records by averaging an astounding 19.3 strikeouts and 1.88 hits over nine innings; and

WHEREAS, Billy Wagner was selected in the first round of the Major League Baseball (MLB) draft by the Houston Astros and worked his way through the team's minor league system before debuting in the MLB on September 13, 1995; and

WHEREAS, in 1997, Billy Wagner struck out an Astros relief-record 106 batters and made his first of seven All-Star teams in 1998; his pitches were now topping out at 100 miles per hour; and

WHEREAS, following his nine-year tenure with the Houston Astros, where he compiled a club record 225 saves, Billy Wagner also pitched with the Philadelphia Phillies, New York Mets, Boston Red Sox, and Atlanta Braves, retiring in 2010 with a career 47-40 record, a 2.31 ERA, and 1,196 strikeouts over 853 games played; and

WHEREAS, Billy Wagner's 422 career saves record is the second highest for a left-handed pitcher in the history of the MLB, while his 11.92 strikeouts per nine innings and .187 opponents' batting average are the best career totals of any pitcher with at least 900 innings pitched; and

WHEREAS, during his MLB career, Billy Wagner was named an All-Star seven times and was presented the National League Rolaids Relief Man Award following his 1999 season, in which he accomplished 39 saves and a 1.57 ERA; and

WHEREAS, in recognition of his extraordinary achievements on the baseball diamond, Billy Wagner was inducted into the National College Baseball Hall of Fame in 2019 and the Virginia Sports Hall of Fame in 2012; and

WHEREAS, after his retirement from Major League Baseball, Billy Wagner settled in Crozet and became a baseball coach at the Miller School of Albemarle, leading the team to three back-to-back Virginia Independent Schools Athletic Association Division II championship wins in 2017, 2018, and 2019; and

WHEREAS, Billy Wagner has given generously of his time to the 2nd Chance Learning Center of Southwestern Virginia, an organization that provides tutoring, mentoring, and counseling services to students in grades six through 12 to support them on their path to a college education; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, That William Edward Wagner hereby be commended for his Hall of Fame-caliber baseball career and for his efforts to assist young people in both Central and Southwest Virginia; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to William Edward Wagner as an expression of the House of Delegates' admiration for his exceptional career and his notable contributions to the Commonwealth.

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