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SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 342

Offered January 10, 2001

Prefiled January 8, 2001

Commending George Welsh.

Patrons—Couric and Potts; Delegates: Harris and Van Yahres

WHEREAS, George Welsh, the most successful football coach in the history of the University of Virginia, has announced his plans to retire; and

WHEREAS, the head coach of the Cavaliers for 19 years, George Welsh has compiled an exemplary record, has led Virginia to 14 consecutive winning seasons, and has taken the Cavaliers to 12 bowl games; and

WHEREAS, a native of Coaldale, Pennsylvania, George Welsh graduated from Coaldale High School and won appointment to the U.S. Naval Academy, where he was a star quarterback; and

WHEREAS, George Welsh led the Midshipmen to a 21-0 upset over heavily favored Mississippi in the Sugar Bowl following the 1955 season, a season in which he led the nation in passing and total offense and placed third in the Heisman Trophy balloting; and

WHEREAS, following 10 years as an assistant coach under Rip Engle and Joe Paterno at Penn State, George Welsh became head coach at his alma mater, coaching Navy to a 55-46-1 record during his nine-year tenure and leading the team to victory in the 1978 Holiday Bowl, Navy's first bowl appearance in 15 years; and

WHEREAS, in 1982, George Welsh took over the football team at the University of Virginia, and by his third season, had turned the program around, coaching the Cavaliers to a record of 8-2-2 and their first bowl appearance, a thrilling 27-24 victory over Purdue; and

WHEREAS, beginning in 1987, the Cavaliers began a streak of 14 consecutive winning seasons, including 13 seasons in a row with at least seven victories, and appearances in 11 post-season bowl games; and

WHEREAS, George Welsh retires as the winningest coach in the history of the University of Virginia, with a career record of 134-85-3, and as the winningest coach in the history of the Atlantic Coast Conference, with a career conference mark of 85-51-3; and

WHEREAS, for all of their success on the field, George Welsh's Cavaliers have also excelled in the classroom, as Virginia won the College Football Association's Academic Achievement Award in 1985 and 1986 and has been honored nationally for its graduation rate among scholarship football players every year since 1987; and

WHEREAS, for his remarkable achievements, George Welsh has been honored repeatedly, including being named Atlantic Coast Conference Coach of the Year five times and NCAA Coach of the Year in 1998; and

WHEREAS, many of George Welsh's Virginia players have won All-America honors, and George Welsh and his staff have produced eight National Football League first-round draft picks; and

WHEREAS, throughout his long coaching career, at the University of Virginia and elsewhere, George Welsh has been successful, his teams have won, his players have graduated, and his programs have been run according to the rules; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commend George Welsh on the completion of an exemplary career as head football coach at the University of Virginia; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to George Welsh as an expression of the General Assembly's admiration and gratitude for his service to the University of Virginia and the Commonwealth.

INTRODUCED

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