

2003 SESSION

ENROLLED

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 444

On the death of William Francis Parkerson, Jr.

Agreed to by the Senate, February 6, 2003
Agreed to by the House of Delegates, February 10, 2003

WHEREAS, William Francis "Bill" Parkerson, Jr., of Henrico County, a former member of the House of Delegates and the Senate of Virginia who served the latter as President pro tempore in 1986-1987, died on January 23, 2003; and

WHEREAS, a native of Rocky Mount, North Carolina, and a graduate of Baltimore City College High School, Bill Parkerson moved to Richmond with his family, graduated from the University of Richmond, and enrolled in the Washington and Lee University School of Law; and

WHEREAS, World War II interrupted Bill Parkerson's legal education, and he enlisted in the Army in 1942 and served with distinction under Brigadier General Frank Dow Merrill in Burma and China as part of the 5307th Provisional Regiment, better known as Merrill's Marauders; and

WHEREAS, Bill Parkerson remained an active member of the Army Reserves after World War II, transferring to the Judge Advocate General Corps, where he attained the rank of colonel before his retirement; and

WHEREAS, Bill Parkerson completed his law degree at Washington and Lee University, began the practice of law, and entered public life when he was elected Commonwealth's Attorney for Henrico County in 1957; and

WHEREAS, Bill Parkerson was elected to the House of Delegates in 1961 and served a single term before he was elected to the Senate of Virginia in 1963, thus beginning a Senate career that was to last for 23 years; and

WHEREAS, a conservative Democrat, Bill Parkerson used his judgment, his negotiating skills, his low-key personality, and the respect he earned from his colleagues to build an impressive legislative record; and

WHEREAS, among his many leadership roles, Bill Parkerson served as chairman of the Senate Committee for Courts of Justice, as vice chairman of the Committee on District Courts, and, on the death of Senator Edward E. Willey in 1986, as President pro tempore of the Senate; and

WHEREAS, among his numerous legislative accomplishments, Bill Parkerson was most proud of his sponsorship of legislation creating the Science Museum of Virginia and a tax check-off system to support the preservation of non-game wildlife in the Commonwealth; and

WHEREAS, following his service in the Senate, Bill Parkerson was appointed by Governor Gerald Baliles to the newly established Virginia State Lottery Board, was elected chairman at the board's first meeting, and held that position during his entire five-year service on the board; and

WHEREAS, Bill Parkerson was an active member of numerous civic, professional, and fraternal organizations and was a member of the Virginia State Bar and the Richmond, Henrico, and Virginia Bar Associations; and

WHEREAS, over a long career of public service, Bill Parkerson established a well-earned reputation for quietly effective advocacy, unquestioned integrity, and an exceptional and sustained devotion to serving the citizens of the Commonwealth; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the General Assembly hereby note with great sadness the loss of a distinguished Virginian, William Francis Parkerson, Jr.; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the family of William Francis Parkerson, Jr., as an expression of the esteem in which his memory is held by the members of the General Assembly and the citizens of Virginia.

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