

2008 SESSION

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SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 209

Offered February 19, 2008

Celebrating the life of Nelson Showalter Gardner.

Patron—Obenshain

WHEREAS, Nelson Showalter Gardner of Bridgewater, a respected citizen, businessman, and community benefactor, died on July 8, 2007; and

WHEREAS, born in Lebanon County, Pennsylvania, in 1930, Nelson Gardner moved with his family to Rockingham County at the age of six; he bought and operated his father's farm by age 19 and married and raised a family with the late Nancy Dinkle Gardner; and

WHEREAS, a savvy businessman, Nelson Gardner founded Rocby Holsteins, a registered cattle operation, and his sons, Dale and Larry, joined the successful family business as partners in 1975; one of his notable sales was of a herd of 100 cattle to John Lennon and Yoko Ono; and

WHEREAS, for 30 years, Nelson Gardner was also the visionary president of Shenandoah's Pride Dairy located in Springfield; and

WHEREAS, committed to the well-being of Virginia's farmers, Nelson Gardner served in leadership positions for numerous state and national agricultural associations and cooperatives, such as the Valley of Virginia Milk Producers, National Milk Producers Federation, and Dairy Farmers of America; and

WHEREAS, Nelson Gardner was honored with numerous awards for his many accomplishments and contributions to the agriculture industry, including the National Dairy Shrine Outstanding Dairy Cow Breeder in 1985, the Virginia Dairyman of the Year in 1987, and the Southeastern Farmer of the Year in 1990; and

WHEREAS, Nelson Gardner supported his community as a member of many civic organizations, serving on the boards of the Bridgewater Retirement Community and the Memory Support House and as chairman of the Virginia Tech advisory board, where he was instrumental in raising \$9 million in funds for the university's Dairy Science department; and

WHEREAS, always willing to lend a hand to his fellow residents in need, Nelson Gardner was a faithful member of the Bridgewater Church of the Brethren, where he was a member of the building committee and a supporter of the church's many missions in the community; and

WHEREAS, Nelson Gardner will be fondly remembered for his kind and generous nature and greatly missed by his devoted wife Kathleen; his four children, Dale, Larry, David, and Kaye, and two stepchildren, Marie and Irvin, and their families, which include his cherished grandchildren and great-grandchildren; numerous other loving relatives and friends; and the citizens of Rockingham County; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the General Assembly note with great sadness the passing of an outstanding Virginian, Nelson Showalter Gardner; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the family of Nelson Showalter Gardner as an expression of the General Assembly's respect for his memory.

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