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## HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 662

Offered January 14, 2009

Prefiled January 9, 2009

*Commending William H. Baxter.*

Patron—Loupassi and O'Bannon

WHEREAS, William H. Baxter, a consummate businessman and dedicated leader of the Retail Merchants Association, retired in 2008; and

WHEREAS, William Baxter began his long and illustrious career in the retail world with a retail-related job at Thalhimer Bros. Inc.; he then rose through the ranks over the years to become senior vice president before the stores closed in 1992; and

WHEREAS, in 1993 William Baxter became president of the Retail Merchants Association of Greater Richmond, now the Retail Merchants Association; and

WHEREAS, under William Baxter's visionary leadership, the Retail Merchants Association has expanded its services and strengthened its programs, helping the retail community of Richmond to flourish; and

WHEREAS, early on, William Baxter recognized the importance and use of the Internet and advancing technology, educating the members of the Retail Merchants Association on the use of the Internet in their businesses and setting up an email system that alerts law enforcement and businesses to criminal activities affecting businesses; and

WHEREAS, recognizing the need for a well-trained workforce, William Baxter supported the partnership with Longwood University to create the first Retail MBA program in Virginia; and

WHEREAS, realizing the importance of the Retail Merchants Association's contact with restaurants and hotel owners, William Baxter was asked to serve as the only nongovernmental member of the Greater Richmond Convention Center Authority, the entity responsible for the creation of the Greater Richmond Convention Center, which has brought numerous conventions to the Richmond area; and

WHEREAS, the creation of the Retail Marketing Expo, an event that brings together retailers and media outlets, has helped Richmond-area retailers to quickly and efficiently meet with appropriate media groups that can help them reach their target markets; and

WHEREAS, both the Virginia Retail Federation, the legislative arm of the Retail Merchants Association, and Merchants' Services, LLC, the insurance company for member companies and employees, were created under William Baxter's leadership to provide essential representation and coverage to members; and

WHEREAS, actively involved in the community, William Baxter has served on numerous local and regional boards of directors and as past president of the Virginia Society of Association Executives; and

WHEREAS, honored for his hard work and dedication, William Baxter received the 2004 Award of Excellence from the Virginia Society of Association Executives; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly commend William H. Baxter for his longtime exemplary leadership of the Retail Merchants Association; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to William H. Baxter as an expression of the General Assembly's respect for his commitment to his profession and service to the Richmond business community.

INTRODUCED

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