

2009 SESSION

ENROLLED

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 691

Celebrating the life of Robert Edward Shepherd, Jr.

Agreed to by the House of Delegates, January 16, 2009
Agreed to by the Senate, January 22, 2009

WHEREAS, Robert Edward Shepherd, Jr., a respected law professor and national leader and advocate for legal issues concerning children and families for over 30 years, died on December 11, 2008; and

WHEREAS, a Richmond native, Robert Shepherd was the son of the late Robert E. Shepherd, Sr.; he earned a bachelor's degree and law degree from Washington and Lee University; and

WHEREAS, the Washington and Lee Law Review published an article by Robert Shepherd in support of a law that would hold parents financially responsible for any child born to them out of wedlock; his brief became the foundation of Virginia's first statute on child abuse, setting the future course of his career; and

WHEREAS, after serving his country in the United States Army Judge Advocate General's Corps, Robert Shepherd began the private practice of law in Richmond; and

WHEREAS, in 1971 Robert Shepherd joined the Virginia Attorney General's Office, where he represented the Division of Youth Services, now the Department of Juvenile Justice; he was the major architect of the 1977 revision of the state juvenile code and statutes on special education and child abuse and neglect; and

WHEREAS, Robert Shepherd began teaching law at the University of Richmond in 1978, where he was a revered professor and mentor to aspiring young lawyers until his retirement in 2001; and

WHEREAS, an expert in legal issues affecting children and families, Robert Shepherd influenced all of juvenile justice legislation in Virginia for three decades, and, in 1999, was the first person inducted into the Virginia Juvenile Court Hall of Fame; and

WHEREAS, Robert Shepherd recently served as a visiting professor at his alma mater, and he was admired as "one of the last of a generation of legal giants in Virginia" by his students and colleagues; and

WHEREAS, Robert Shepherd was a founder of the University of Richmond's National Center for Family Law and a member of its board; and

WHEREAS, over the years, Robert Shepherd generously gave his time and expertise to many organizations, including as a board member of the Action Alliance for Virginia's Children and Youth, as well as chairing both the American Bar Association's Juvenile Justice Committee and the Virginia Bar Association's Committee on the Needs of Children; and

WHEREAS, throughout his distinguished career, Robert Shepherd received numerous awards and accolades, including the University of Richmond's Distinguished Educator Award and the Child Advocacy Award of the National Association of Counsel for Children; and

WHEREAS, Robert Shepherd was a faithful member of River Road Church, Baptist, where he taught Sunday school for 36 years and was active in the church's many missions in the community; and

WHEREAS, a devoted family man and loyal friend, Robert Shepherd will be fondly remembered and greatly missed by his wife, Nancy Baker Shepherd; his son Robert III; his two daughters, Sharon and Stephanie; his two stepdaughters, Kara and Courtney; his mother, Mildred Shepherd; his five grandchildren; and many other loving family members and friends; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly note with great sadness the passing of a fine attorney and outstanding Virginian, Robert Edward Shepherd, Jr.; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the family of Robert Edward Shepherd, Jr., as an expression of the General Assembly's respect for his memory.

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