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SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 449

Offered February 9, 2011

Celebrating the life of Richard DeForest Robertson.

Patrons—Hanger; Delegates: Bell, Richard P. and Landes

WHEREAS, Richard DeForest Robertson, a retired business executive who served the City of Staunton and the Commonwealth with great distinction, died on January 20, 2011; and

WHEREAS, a graduate of the University of Connecticut, Richard "Dick" Robertson served as a fighter pilot in World War II, before embarking on a successful business career that eventually led to his relocation to the Shenandoah Valley as plant manager for American Safety Razor Company, a subsidiary of Philip Morris, Inc.; and

WHEREAS, promoted to corporate vice president for Philip Morris, Inc., Dick Robertson chose to commute to New York rather than move for his job because of his deep love and affection for the City of Staunton and the Shenandoah Valley; and

WHEREAS, a successful businessman, Dick Robertson worked diligently to promote the Commonwealth as a great place for businesses through his involvement with local and state chambers of commerce, eventually serving as president of the Virginia Chamber of Commerce in the early 1970s; and

WHEREAS, during part of his tenure at Philip Morris, Dick Robertson was responsible for the company's environmental protection activities and became involved with numerous state committees regarding the environment, including serving as chair of Virginia's Council on the Environment; and

WHEREAS, after his retirement, Dick Robertson remained active in state and local affairs, serving on the Staunton City Council, helping develop the American Frontier Culture Museum, and serving as an elder at First Presbyterian Church; and

WHEREAS, Dick Robertson took particular interest in Staunton's most notable citizen, President Woodrow Wilson, and served as a Woodrow Wilson Presidential Library Foundation trustee and chair of the Pierce-Arrow Committee; and

WHEREAS, an enthusiast of antique cars, Dick Robertson spent more than 20 years on the Pierce-Arrow Committee, which oversees the care and coordinates the showing of President Wilson's 1919 Pierce Arrow limousine; and

WHEREAS, for more than 20 years, Dick Robertson, as chair of the Pierce-Arrow Committee for the Woodrow Wilson Presidential Library and Museum, worked tirelessly to restore, repair, and maintain the Pierce-Arrow as a valuable piece of American and presidential history; and

WHEREAS, Dick Robertson oversaw all of the Pierce Arrow's trips and was especially proud when the car received the "Most Exceptional Car" award at the Kansas City "Art of the Car Concours" in 2010; and

WHEREAS, during his retirement years, Dick Robertson took an active role in organizing projects around Staunton and the Commonwealth that provided services to children and those less fortunate; the Shenandoah chapter of the National Society of Fundraising Executives recognized him in 2000 as its Philanthropist of the Year; and

WHEREAS, a man of high principles and great integrity, Dick Robertson leaves behind a sterling legacy of service to his country, the Commonwealth, and the community that others may strive to emulate; 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 an esteemed citizen of the Commonwealth, Richard DeForest Robertson; and, be it

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

INTRODUCED

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