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## HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 453

Offered February 27, 2012

*Celebrating the life of Captain Ronald Anton Erchul, USN (Ret.).*Patron—Cline

WHEREAS, Captain Ronald Anton Erchul, USN (Ret.), a distinguished veteran of the United States Navy whose career as a professor at Virginia Military Institute spanned over 25 years, died on October 8, 2011; and

WHEREAS, a native of Wisconsin, Ronald Erchul received an appointment to the United States Naval Academy, where he was right tackle on the football team and played in the 1961 Orange Bowl; he was also drafted by his home state Green Bay Packers; and

WHEREAS, Ronald Erchul began his career in the United States Navy as first lieutenant and navigator on board the USS *Windham County* and later served as executive officer and navigator of the USS *Mahnomon County* and operations officer of the USS *Alfred A. Cunningham*; and

WHEREAS, an admired officer, Captain Erchul assumed positions of increasing responsibility, eventually serving as head of the Ocean Engineering and Construction Project Office before returning to the United States Naval Academy as an engineering instructor and researcher before his retirement; and

WHEREAS, while serving in the military, Captain Erchul earned a master's degree from the Naval Postgraduate School and a doctorate from the University of Rhode Island; and

WHEREAS, at the conclusion of his exemplary military career, Captain Erchul joined Virginia Military Institute as an associate professor of civil and environmental engineering; and

WHEREAS, Captain Erchul provided students with expert instruction to prepare them to enter their fields while collaborating with colleagues at the college and across the Commonwealth on several important environmental initiatives; and

WHEREAS, Captain Erchul organized and chaired the first Environment Virginia Symposium, which brings together public and private sector representatives to exchange information and technology, and established the Environment Virginia Symposium Leadership Award, which was later renamed in his honor; and

WHEREAS, Captain Erchul worked with state leaders to create the Commonwealth of Virginia Information Technology Symposium and Commonwealth of Virginia Energy Symposium and managed the development of the 2003 Governor's Homeland Security Conference; and

WHEREAS, Captain Erchul also worked to establish a minor at Virginia Military Institute in Environmental Leadership and Management and served as an editor of *Essays on Environmental Leadership*, published by the school; and

WHEREAS, Captain Erchul earned numerous awards and accolades throughout his career, including the Navy Commendation Medal, the Matthew Fontaine Maury Research Award, the Virginia Military Institute's Meritorious Service Medal, and induction into the Virginia Chapter of Tau Beta Pi; and

WHEREAS, throughout his career, Ronald Erchul made many notable contributions to the country and the Commonwealth, leaving behind a sterling legacy of service; and

WHEREAS, predeceased by his daughter, Debbie, Ronald Erchul will be fondly remembered and greatly missed by his wife, Beverly; daughter, Maria, and her family; numerous other family members and friends; and former students and colleagues; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly hereby note with great sadness the loss of a distinguished veteran, outstanding professor, and committed environmental leader, Captain Ronald Anton Erchul, USN (Ret.); 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 Captain Ronald Anton Erchul, USN (Ret.), as an expression of the General Assembly's respect for his memory.

INTRODUCED

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