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**SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 24**
Offered January 11, 2012
Prefiled January 9, 2012
*Celebrating the life of Paul Benjamin Ferrara.*
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Patron—McDougle
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WHEREAS, Paul Benjamin Ferrara, the former director of the Virginia Department of Forensic Science who transformed the field of forensic science with his visionary forensic DNA work, died on May 30, 2011; and

WHEREAS, a graduate of Lemoyne College, Paul Ferrara earned doctorates from both the State University of New York and Syracuse University and worked briefly for E.I du Pont de Nemours and Company in Waynesboro before joining the Department of Forensic Science in its Northern Virginia laboratory; and

WHEREAS, in 1985, Paul Ferrara became director of the Virginia Department of Forensic Science, leading the organization as it transitioned from a bureau in the Department of General Services to department status; and

WHEREAS, Paul Ferrara oversaw the funding, design, and construction of four new state-of-the art forensic science/medical examiner facilities and funded and established a new classification and compensation series for forensic scientists in order to attract and retain the best talent; and

WHEREAS, a brilliant forensic scientist, Paul Ferrara realized the important role that DNA could play in fighting crime and worked closely with law-enforcement professionals, legislators, state leaders, and others to develop laws governing the use of DNA and other forensic evidence in trials; and

WHEREAS, under Paul Ferrara's leadership, the Virginia Department of Forensic Science became the first state laboratory to offer DNA analyses to law-enforcement agencies and the first to create a DNA database of previously convicted sex offenders; and

WHEREAS, in 1992, Virginia became a pilot state for a national DNA databank (CODIS) and for the Federal Bureau of Investigation's automated firearms comparison database (DRUGFIRE); and

WHEREAS, a nationally recognized expert on DNA, Paul Ferrara published several reports and was appointed to the Federal Bureau of Investigations' DNA Advisory Board and the National Institute of Justice's National Commission on the Future of DNA Evidence; and

WHEREAS, Paul Ferrara served as a member and chair of the American Society of Crime Laboratory Directors/Laboratory Accreditation Board and provided insight and guidance to numerous other professional organizations; and

WHEREAS, recognizing the importance of highly trained professionals in forensic medicine, Paul Ferrara cofounded the Virginia Institute of Forensic Science and Medicine to train forensic scientists, toxicologists, and pathologists in a working laboratory; and

WHEREAS, Paul Ferrara influenced a rising generation of forensic scientists as he worked to establish a graduate program in forensic science at Virginia Commonwealth University and taught in the school's program; and

WHEREAS, Paul Ferrara received numerous awards and accolades over the course of his remarkable and groundbreaking career, including the American Society of Crime Laboratory Directors' Briggs White Award, the President's Award from the Virginia Association of Chiefs of Police, and a Lifetime Achievement Award from the Virginia Homicide Investigators Association; and

WHEREAS, in honor of his legacy, the Department of Forensic Science's Central Laboratory was renamed the Paul B. Ferrara Building; and

WHEREAS, Paul Ferrara's substantial and long-lasting contributions to his field and the Department of Forensic Science have brought great honor to the Commonwealth and he will be remembered and missed by his loving family, many friends, and devoted colleagues; 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 extraordinary public servant, Paul Benjamin Ferrara; and, be it

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