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HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 249

Offered March 10, 2016

Commending Bruce W. Edwards.

Patrons—Villanueva, Davis, Knight, Lindsey, Miyares, Stolle and Taylor

WHEREAS, Bruce W. Edwards, who served as chief of the Department of Emergency Medical Services for the City of Virginia Beach for 32 years and whose outstanding abilities and leadership in first-response medical care benefited the people of Virginia Beach and the Commonwealth in countless ways, retired on March 1, 2016; and

WHEREAS, Bruce Edwards' 42-year career in emergency medical services in Virginia Beach began in 1967 when he joined the Ocean Park Volunteer Fire and Rescue Unit; he served in many positions, rising to the rank of assistant fire and rescue chief, and is still active as a volunteer; and

WHEREAS, in 1973, Bruce Edwards became executive director of the Emergency Coronary Care Program of Virginia Beach, Inc., a federally funded program that produced the first advanced life support technicians in the Commonwealth; and

WHEREAS, as coordinator of the Office of Emergency Medical Services for the City of Virginia Beach from 1975 to 1984, Bruce Edwards was responsible for pre-hospital emergency patient care and training programs; he then was promoted to chief of the Department of Emergency Medical Services (EMS) in 1984; and

WHEREAS, Bruce Edwards led an EMS department with more than 1,500 career and volunteer rescue and fire personnel; in addition to supervising all EMS operations in Virginia Beach, he regulated private ambulance services and oceanfront lifeguard operations; and

WHEREAS, the demand for EMS services has grown from around 8,000 calls for assistance annually when Bruce Edwards assumed command of the Virginia Beach EMS department in 1984 to approximately 44,000 calls for service annually today; and

WHEREAS, Bruce Edwards has served the Commonwealth with distinction; he received gubernatorial appointments to the State Emergency Medical Services Advisory Board in 2006 and the Virginia Board of Health in 2009 and has been chair of the Board of Health since 2011; and

WHEREAS, Bruce Edwards earned bachelor's and master's degrees from Old Dominion University; he served the nation as a member of the United States Navy Reserve, and he also is the longest-tenured CPR instructor, paramedic, and administrator in the Commonwealth; and

WHEREAS, numerous accolades have been given to Bruce Edwards, including the Governor's Award as the Outstanding EMS Administrator in the Commonwealth of Virginia in 1996 and the 2012 Virginia Beach Rescue Squad Foundation Virginia Gilpin Distinguished Service Award; and

WHEREAS, the Tidewater EMS Council named its Outstanding EMS Administrator Award in Bruce Edwards' honor; he was an active first responder throughout his career and is a life member of the Ocean Park Volunteer Fire and Rescue Unit and the Virginia Association of Volunteer Rescue Squads, Inc.; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, That Bruce W. Edwards, chief of the Department of Emergency Medical Services for the City of Virginia Beach for 32 years, hereby be commended on the occasion of his retirement and for his leadership of a department whose vital work affects countless lives; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to Bruce W. Edwards as an expression of the House of Delegates' respect and admiration for his outstanding and distinguished contributions to the City of Virginia Beach and the Commonwealth.

INTRODUCED

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