

2016 SESSION

ENROLLED

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 132

Celebrating the life of Robert E. Simon, Jr.

Agreed to by the Senate, February 4, 2016
Agreed to by the House of Delegates, February 12, 2016

WHEREAS, Robert E. Simon, Jr., the visionary urban planner who was respected throughout the world for his creation of Reston, a planned community that has inspired countless architects and planners and served as a model for other such communities, died on September 21, 2015, at the age of 101; and

WHEREAS, a native of New York City, Robert Simon earned a bachelor's degree from Harvard University and joined many of the other young men of his generation in service to the nation during World War II; and

WHEREAS, after his honorable military service, Robert Simon returned home to manage his family's real estate business; in 1961, he sold Carnegie Hall, one of his family's holdings, to fund the creation of a mixed-use, planned town, where residents could live, work, and play in the same area; and

WHEREAS, Robert Simon envisioned Reston as a "New Town," where individuals and families of every race, background, and income level could find a home; his unique founding principles of "smart growth," "aging in place," "green cities," and "new urbanism" are studied and admired throughout the nation and the world; and

WHEREAS, influenced by New York City's Central Park, Robert Simon believed that both structural and natural beauty are essential to a good life and that neighborhoods should incorporate a full range of housing styles to best accommodate the needs of all community members; and

WHEREAS, in 1964, the first residents moved into the Lake Anne Village Center, Reston's first village and the neighborhood that bears the most hallmarks of Robert Simon's original designs; Reston now houses nearly 60,000 residents in a walkable community of neighborhoods and village centers connected by dozens of miles of paved pathways to schools, recreational facilities, shopping centers, and businesses; and

WHEREAS, after returning to New York for a period, Robert Simon moved back to Reston in 1992 and became the community's most active citizen; he served as a two-time at-large board member of the Reston Association and was a passionate supporter for education, environmental, and youth programs; and

WHEREAS, Robert Simon earned many awards and accolades for his achievements in urban planning, including the Planning Pioneer Award from the American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP); Reston earned the National Planning Landmark Award from the AICP, was named one of the Best Places to Live by *CNN Money Magazine*, and was the first community to be named as an Urban Wildlife Habitat by the National Wildlife Federation; and

WHEREAS, Robert Simon will be fondly remembered and greatly missed by numerous family members and friends; 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 Robert E. Simon, Jr., a highly respected urban planner and the founder of the acclaimed Reston community; and, be it

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

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