

17102009D

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 967

Offered February 15, 2017

Commending Maria J. K. Everett.

Patrons—Kory (By Request) and Carr

WHEREAS, Maria J. K. Everett, a respected senior attorney at the Division of Legislative Services and a dedicated advocate for transparency and open government as the executive director of the Freedom of Information Advisory Council, has served the Commonwealth for more than 30 years; and

WHEREAS, a native of Washington, D.C., Maria Everett earned a bachelor's degree from Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, and in the late 1970s, she supported efforts to merge the International School of Law in Washington, D.C., with George Mason University, creating the George Mason University School of Law, where she earned a law degree in 1981; and

WHEREAS, Maria Everett was admitted to the Virginia State Bar in 1982, and she began a long and successful career in state government as a committee clerk for the Senate of Virginia during the 1984 and 1985 Sessions of the General Assembly, serving the Courts of Justice, Finance, Commerce and Labor, and Education and Health Committees; and

WHEREAS, Maria Everett continued to serve the Commonwealth as a property registration administrator for the Virginia Department of Commerce from 1986 to 1990, when she joined the Division of Legislative Services; and

WHEREAS, beginning with the 1991 Session of the General Assembly, Maria Everett staffed the House General Laws Committee for 27 sessions, providing expert counsel to four committee chairs over the course of her career: the Honorable Alan A. Diamonstein, the Honorable John S. Reid, the Honorable S. Chris Jones, and the Honorable C. Todd Gilbert; and

WHEREAS, in July 2000, Maria Everett became the first and only executive director of the Virginia Freedom of Information Advisory Council (FOIA Council), after spearheading the study to create the FOIA Council; and

WHEREAS, created as an advisory council to the legislative branch, the FOIA Council encourages and facilitates compliance with the Virginia Freedom of Information Act, and under Maria Everett's leadership, the FOIA Council has become a model for other states seeking to enhance compliance with open government laws; and

WHEREAS, in addition to faithfully serving and advising the members of the General Assembly in the course of their duties, the FOIA Council responds to inquiries from private citizens and members of the media about access to open records and meetings; in her capacity as executive director, Maria Everett has rendered thousands of informal opinions and hundreds of written opinions on the application of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act; and

WHEREAS, Maria Everett is respected for her unique insights and her breadth of expertise on a wide variety of general laws areas, including the Virginia Public Procurement Act, Alcoholic Beverage Control Act, Property Owners' Association Act, Virginia Residential Landlord and Tenant Act, and State and Local Government Conflict of Interests Act, and on the regulation of professions and occupations; her legacy of incomparable institutional knowledge endures in the many young attorneys she has proudly mentored throughout her career; and

WHEREAS, Maria Everett's personal integrity, commitment to public service, and professional contributions have helped ensure the good and efficient functioning of state government and enabled the General Assembly to better serve the residents of the Commonwealth; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commend Maria J. K. Everett for her more than three decades of exceptional service to the Commonwealth; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to Maria J. K. Everett as an expression of the General Assembly's admiration for her contributions to the Commonwealth and commitment to open government.

INTRODUCED

HJ967