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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 310

Offered February 21, 2018

Commending Laszlo Berkowits.

Patrons—Simon, Adams, D.M., Delaney, Filler-Corn, Guzman, Hope, Hurst, Krizek, Lopez, Plum, Rasoul, Sullivan, Turpin and Ware; Senators: Ebbin, Howell and Saslaw

WHEREAS, Laszlo Berkowits, a Holocaust survivor and respected rabbi who has made many contributions to the Northern Virginia community, celebrates his 90th birthday in 2018; and

WHEREAS, born in Hungary on February 9, 1928, Laszlo Berkowits endured great hardship during World War II, when he was imprisoned by the Nazis at the concentration camps of Auschwitz, Braunschweig, and Wobbelin from 1944 to 1945; and

WHEREAS, after the war, Laszlo Berkowits studied in Sweden, then came to the United States, where he graduated from the University of Cincinnati and earned a Bachelor of Hebrew Letters, Master of Hebrew Letters, and Doctor of Divinity degrees from Hebrew Union College; and

WHEREAS, Laszlo Berkowits was ordained in 1963 and became the founding rabbi of Temple Rodef Shalom in Falls Church; he served the congregation for 35 years, retiring as senior rabbi in 1998, when he was named rabbi emeritus; and

WHEREAS, Laszlo Berkowits served as a board member of the American Jewish Committee's Washington, D.C., chapter and is a former executive board member of the Central Conference of American Rabbis, as well as a former president of the organization's Mid-Atlantic Region; in addition to his leadership in Jewish organizations, he has fostered interfaith cooperation in McLean; and

WHEREAS, Laszlo Berkowits also strengthened the community by supporting civic organizations and humanitarian causes, including as a member of the Virginia Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights and the Virginia Human Rights Council; and

WHEREAS, for many years, Laszlo Berkowits served as a guest lecturer at American University and what is now the National Intelligence University, and he raised awareness about the horrors of the Holocaust as a speaker at public schools throughout Northern Virginia; and

WHEREAS, in 2008, Laszlo Berkowits published *The Boy Who Lost His Birthday: A Memoir of Loss, Survival, and Triumph*, the uplifting story of his life's journey; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commend Laszlo Berkowits on the occasion of his 90th birthday; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to Laszlo Berkowits as an expression of the General Assembly's admiration for his legacy of service as a spiritual and community leader.

INTRODUCED

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