

## SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 218

*Celebrating the life of the Honorable Harry Robert Purkey.*

Agreed to by the Senate, March 8, 2018  
Agreed to by the House of Delegates, March 9, 2018

WHEREAS, the Honorable Harry Robert Purkey, a dedicated and respected public servant who represented the residents of Virginia Beach in the House of Delegates for nearly three decades, died on February 16, 2018; and

WHEREAS, a native of Parsons, West Virginia, Robert "Bob" Purkey relocated to Norfolk with his family and graduated from Maury High School, where he met his future wife, Sonja Firing Purkey, who attended rival Granby High School; he worked to support himself through college, graduating from what is now Old Dominion University; and

WHEREAS, in the 1960s, Bob Purkey worked at Continental Grain Company, then accepted a job with Merrill Lynch, Pierce, Fenner & Beane, where he worked for more than five decades until his well-earned retirement in 2015; and

WHEREAS, desirous to be of further service to the community and the Commonwealth, Bob Purkey ran for and was elected to the House of Delegates in 1985; he represented the residents of the 82nd District with honor and distinction until 2014, introducing and supporting many important pieces of legislation to strengthen the Commonwealth and benefit all Virginians; and

WHEREAS, Bob Purkey, a true southern gentleman, brought a level of congeniality and camaraderie to the General Assembly, beginning his service as a member of the "Beach Boys" and ending as one of the most senior and respected members of the legislature; and

WHEREAS, during his tenure as a state legislator, Bob Purkey relished the opportunity to meet the residents of his district and ensure that their voices were heard in the state capital; he offered his insights to several committees and, in recognition of his tremendous financial acumen, was appointed chair of the House Committee on Finance; and

WHEREAS, Bob Purkey supported the community in many other ways, volunteering his time and leadership to numerous organizations, including local Republican and student groups, Beach House, the Food Bank of Southeastern Virginia, and the Republican Party of Virginia Beach, as well as the Tidewater Automobile Association, Virginia Aquarium, and the Jamestown-Yorktown Foundation; he was also a passionate youth and recreational athletics coach in both football and basketball, and was an admired role model for countless young people; and

WHEREAS, predeceased by his wife, Sonja, Bob Purkey will be fondly remembered and greatly missed by his children, Harry, Jr., Charlotte, and Greg, and their families, including his granddaughters, Kristina and Charlotte; and numerous other family members, friends, and colleagues on both sides of the aisle; 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 the Honorable Harry Robert "Bob" Purkey, who served the Commonwealth with the utmost integrity, dedication, and distinction; and, be it

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