

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 341

Commending the Honorable Robert W. Goodlatte.

Agreed to by the Senate, January 31, 2019
Agreed to by the House of Delegates, February 1, 2019

WHEREAS, in 2019, the Honorable Robert W. Goodlatte retired from public office after 26 years of dedicated service to the residents of Roanoke, Lynchburg, and much of the Shenandoah Valley in Virginia's Sixth Congressional District; and

WHEREAS, a former attorney, Robert W. "Bob" Goodlatte first ran for the United States House of Representatives in 1992; he was undefeated in 13 general elections and three primary contests, becoming the longest-serving representative in the history of the Sixth District; and

WHEREAS, Bob Goodlatte represented more than 750,000 constituents through offices in Roanoke, Lynchburg, Staunton, and Harrisonburg; he held monthly Open Door Meetings in smaller cities and towns throughout the Sixth District and attended a multitude of community events, driving more than a million miles during his service; and

WHEREAS, during his tenure, Bob Goodlatte served as Chairman of the United States House Committee on Agriculture from 2003 - 2004, followed by four successive years as Ranking Member of the Agriculture Committee; and served as Chairman of the United States House Committee on the Judiciary for a full six-year term from 2013 - 2018; and

WHEREAS, Bob Goodlatte served as Co-Chair of the Congressional Internet Caucus, Chair of the House Republican Technology Working Group, Co-Chair of the International Creativity and Theft-Prevention Caucus, Co-Chair of the Congressional Civil Justice Caucus, and a member of the House Majority and House Minority Whip and leadership teams; and

WHEREAS, Bob Goodlatte introduced and supported numerous important pieces of legislation to support the Sixth District and benefit all Americans; his first piece of legislation signed into law created the Mount Pleasant National Scenic Area in Amherst County; and

WHEREAS, Bob Goodlatte secured final funding for the James R. Olin Flood Prevention Project in Buena Vista and the Roanoke River Flood Reduction Project in the City of Roanoke, a project designed to include portions of the hiking and biking trails comprising the Roanoke Valley Greenways; and

WHEREAS, Bob Goodlatte enhanced transportation in the Sixth District, introducing legislation to eventually enable the extension of Amtrak service to Lynchburg and Roanoke and legislation to route Interstate 73 through Roanoke; and

WHEREAS, a champion for fiscal responsibility, Bob Goodlatte proposed a Balanced Budget Amendment to the Constitution in each Congress for the last 10 years; and

WHEREAS, Bob Goodlatte sponsored the Anticounterfeiting Consumer Protection Act of 1996, which provided more controls and prevention of counterfeiting; the No Electronic Theft Act of 1997, which enhanced copyright protection through increased prosecutions of violators; and the Telemarketing Fraud Prevention Act of 1998, which boosted consumer protection from fraudulent telemarketing schemes; and

WHEREAS, the Clinton administration subsequently relaxed export restrictions on encrypted software and hardware, fully implementing efforts that had begun years prior thanks to Bob Goodlatte's visionary leadership; and

WHEREAS, Bob Goodlatte's contributions to the Telecommunications Act of 1996 paved the way for expanded competitive telecom services and wider deployment of broadband Internet; his leadership on the Internet Tax Freedom Act of 1998 prevented taxes on Internet access and a permanent ban that he authored was later signed into law by President Barack Obama; and his Rural Local Broadcast Signal Act of 2002 expanded access to local television stations on satellite television systems; and

WHEREAS, Bob Goodlatte's other work in the field of technology included the Unlawful Internet Gambling Enforcement Act of 2006 and the USA Freedom Act of 2015, which balanced national security with the protection of Americans' civil liberties and ended the bulk collection of personal data by the National Security Agency; and

WHEREAS, Bob Goodlatte made lasting contributions to civil justice reform including his Class Action Fairness Act of 2005 which protected consumers by curbing class action abuse; and

WHEREAS, building on his years of work to protect intellectual property, Bob Goodlatte was instrumental to the passage of the America Invents Act of 2011, which contained elements of his longtime work to reform the patent system; and

WHEREAS, Bob Goodlatte supported agriculture, assisting in the creation of the Virginia Poultry Growers Cooperative and passing the Farm Bill of 2008, overriding a Presidential veto; and

WHEREAS, among his recent contributions to the nation, Bob Goodlatte completed decades-long work to update the nation's music copyright laws for the digital age with the Hatch-Goodlatte Music Modernization Act of 2018 and a career-long, bipartisan goal to reform America's criminal justice system including sentencing reform for federal crimes and post-incarceration programs with the passage of the First Step Act of 2018; and

WHEREAS, throughout his career, Bob Goodlatte enjoyed the support of his devoted wife, Maryellen; his children, Jennifer and Bobby; his son-in-law, Matt Barblan, and his two beloved granddaughters; and

WHEREAS, Bob Goodlatte was the epitome of a servant-leader, who represented the Commonwealth with the utmost integrity and dedication, engendering the respect of his constituents and colleagues and the loyalty of his staff; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commend the Honorable Robert W. Goodlatte on the occasion of his retirement from the United States House of Representatives; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the Honorable Robert W. Goodlatte as an expression of the General Assembly's admiration for his legacy of leadership and unparalleled contributions to Virginia's Sixth Congressional District.