

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 446

Celebrating the life of William McKinnon.

Agreed to by the Senate, February 21, 2019
 Agreed to by the House of Delegates, February 23, 2019

WHEREAS, William McKinnon, an esteemed and deeply loved attorney, a true Virginia gentleman, and a man of deep and abiding faith who devoted his life to serving others, died on May 30, 2018; and

WHEREAS, William "Tex" McKinnon graduated from Cooper High School in Abilene, Texas, where he was an accomplished football player who set the record for the most rushing yards; he was also regarded in the great state of Texas as an actor of considerable ability to the extent that he was voted the most outstanding high school thespian in 1965; and

WHEREAS, Tex McKinnon was also a fierce football player at The College of William and Mary while he earned his bachelor's degree; in 1967, under the leadership of the legendary coach Marv Levy, Tex McKinnon played in the astonishing 27-16 upset over the United States Naval Academy, which at the time was ranked number four in the nation, a game that ESPN ranks as one of the top 10 college football upsets of the 1960s; and

WHEREAS, during his college years, Tex McKinnon stayed true to the performer within by acting in several theatrical performances, much to the delight of his football teammates who threw roses on the stage at the mere sight of him; and

WHEREAS, Tex McKinnon joined the United States Navy and retired as a commander in the Naval Reserves, serving his country during the Vietnam War and the Gulf War; and

WHEREAS, Tex McKinnon began his legal career in the area of trusts and estates as a bank executive and went on to establish and run the trust department at several large financial institutions; and

WHEREAS, Tex McKinnon graduated from The College of William and Mary's Marshall-Wythe School of Law and he received a master's degree in law and taxation while he was working as a bank executive; and

WHEREAS, while working as a bank executive, Tex McKinnon also met his wife, Debbie, and his claim to be a bona fide Texan was never diminished despite the fact that he married a beautiful Okie who reportedly made him root for the University of Oklahoma Sooners; and

WHEREAS, for more than 20 years, Tex McKinnon practiced in the areas of juvenile criminal law, child custody, divorce, estate and trust planning and administration, and closely-held business representation; and

WHEREAS, in 2007, Tex McKinnon became a founding member and managing partner in the law firm of Montgomery, Kelly & McKinnon, where he was a mentor and friend to his fellow partners and staff; and

WHEREAS, Tex McKinnon could always be counted on to inject a bit of levity into otherwise serious matters, and he later played the role made famous by Lee J. Cobb in *Twelve Angry Men* in the local playhouse after he became a lawyer; he utilized his skills as an actor in the courtroom to the extent that the participants rarely realized they were merely bit players in a play that he was clearly directing; and

WHEREAS, one such performance involved misconduct on the part of his client toward a guinea pig, and as he painstakingly made his closing argument to the court, Tex McKinnon slowly and deliberately opened his coat that only the judge and his clerk could see to reveal a stuffed guinea pig in the coat pocket of his suit, defusing the seriousness of the situation; and

WHEREAS, these theatrics became the norm in a Tex McKinnon case, and his use of props and other theatric techniques enhanced his reputation as a clever lawyer; members of the bench began to look for the proverbial "red herring" the moment he entered the courtroom; they couldn't take their eyes off him, and he never disappointed; and

WHEREAS, as he did in all endeavors of his life, Tex McKinnon was able to maintain his sense of humor and compassion while ably serving his clients, and at the same time, garnering the respect and friendship of his colleagues; and

WHEREAS, Tex McKinnon was trusted and relied upon by many judges before whom he presented; he was a true and faithful advocate and a model of propriety in all matters, whether he was retained or appointed by the court; and

WHEREAS, Tex McKinnon was well known for his humility, compassion, integrity, and zealous legal representation, and he touched countless lives in Williamsburg and throughout the Commonwealth; and

WHEREAS, Tex McKinnon will be fondly remembered and greatly missed by his wife, Debbie; his children, Hull, Garrett, and Catherine, and their families; and numerous other family members, friends, and colleagues; 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 William McKinnon; and, be it

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