

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 173

Celebrating the life of John W. Gerdelman.

Agreed to by the Senate, March 2, 2020
Agreed to by the House of Delegates, March 3, 2020

WHEREAS, John W. Gerdelman, a successful businessman, pioneering telecommunications entrepreneur, and honorable veteran, died on January 4, 2020; and

WHEREAS, before graduating from The College of William & Mary with a degree in chemistry in 1975, John Gerdelman distinguished himself as a three-year letterman on the football team and an Academic All-American in 1974; and

WHEREAS, shortly after graduation, John Gerdelman enlisted in the United States Navy, earning his aviator wings and flying an EA-6B Prowler, the United States Navy's primary carrier-based electronic warfare jet, on active duty for six years; and

WHEREAS, beginning his professional career at Baxter-Travenol, John Gerdelman would become an early proponent of the power of telecommunications technology and internet services and later hold many prominent executive positions during the industry's meteoric rise; and

WHEREAS, John Gerdelman was president of Pioneer TeleTechnologies/MCI Services and later networkMCI, a leading telemarketing, sales, and service company; he also had leadership roles with USA.NET, Long Lines, Ltd., and Intelliden, which he cofounded in 2000 and sold to IBM in 2010; and

WHEREAS, valued for his business acumen and expertise, John Gerdelman served on many corporate boards, including those of Brocade Communications Systems, Owens & Minor, and Local Voice, and assisted several technology companies and startups as both a turnaround specialist and an investor; and

WHEREAS, a proud alumnus of The College of William & Mary, John Gerdelman gave considerably in many ways to his alma mater; he was appointed to two terms on the university's Board of Visitors, served as chair of the William & Mary Foundation and the school's Real Estate Foundation Board, and was a member of the Tribe Club Executive Board; and

WHEREAS, in recognition of his years of service on behalf of the university, John Gerdelman received the Alumni Medallion in 2005, The College of William & Mary's highest alumni honor, and an honorary doctor of humane letters degree in 2019; and

WHEREAS, the Commonwealth is indebted to John Gerdelman for the contributions he made during his years of service as a gubernatorial appointee to the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia; and

WHEREAS, John Gerdelman will be dearly remembered and sorely missed by his beloved wife of 43 years, Sue; his children, Mark and Emily, and their families; and numerous other family members and friends; 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 John W. Gerdelman, a cherished member of the Williamsburg community who had a positive impact on countless lives as a businessman and friend; and, be it

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

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