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SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 391

Offered February 2, 2021

Celebrating the life of Lester Zidel.

Patrons—Boysko and Mason

WHEREAS, Lester Zidel, a beloved public servant in Herndon who advocated on behalf of his community and the arts for many years, died on October 9, 2020; and

WHEREAS, born in Reading, California, and educated in Malden, Massachusetts, Lester "Les" Zidel earned a bachelor's degree in political science from the University of Wisconsin, where he was active in local politics and student government; and

WHEREAS, from 1986 to 1995, Les Zidel was a driven and innovative leader on Herndon's Planning Commission and guided the town through an important stage in its development; as author of the town's "Think Village" concept, he helped shape the local village streets policy and cultivated a more beautiful and neighborly Herndon; and

WHEREAS, Les Zidel was a member of the executive committee of the Herndon Festival and oversaw the event's growth and development into a four-day community gathering that consistently earns praise from residents and is recognized throughout the Commonwealth as one of the marquee events of the year; and

WHEREAS, Les Zidel's efforts on behalf of the Herndon Festival were duly recognized by a Herndon Town Council proclamation in 2016, one of many official honors received by Les Zidel over his lifetime; and

WHEREAS, in 1988, Les Zidel founded the Elden Street Players, a volunteer-run playhouse that brought award-winning productions to the community for 25 years; today, the theatre has expanded into a professional production house known as NextStop Theatre Company and continues to be a major force in the cultural life of Herndon; and

WHEREAS, Les Zidel was a co-founder of the Herndon Foundation for the Cultural Arts, an organization that recently merged with Arts Herndon to create ArtSpace, a permanent gallery and performance space that has become a cherished cultural destination in Herndon; and

WHEREAS, in recognition of his meritorious efforts on behalf of the community, Les Zidel was honored as the Rotary Club of Herndon's Rotarian of the Year in 1987, the Herndon Chamber of Commerce's Business Citizen of the Year in 1992, and the Town of Herndon's Distinguished Volunteer in 2010; and

WHEREAS, Les Zidel will be dearly remembered and fondly missed by his brother, Howard, and his family; 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 Lester Zidel, a treasured public servant and arts advocate in Herndon who touched countless lives through his wise and compassionate leadership; and, be it

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

INTRODUCED

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