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SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 133

Offered February 16, 2022

Celebrating the life of Warren Ballinger French, Jr.

Patrons—Obenshain, Barker, Bell, Boysko, Chase, Cosgrove, Deeds, Dunnivant, Ebbin, Edwards, Favola, Hackworth, Hanger, Hashmi, Howell, Kiggans, Lewis, Locke, Lucas, Marsden, Mason, McClellan, McDougle, McPike, Morrissey, Newman, Norment, Peake, Petersen, Pillion, Reeves, Ruff, Saslaw, Spruill, Stanley, Suetterlein, Surovell and Vogel; Delegate: Gilbert

WHEREAS, Warren Ballinger French, Jr., an active leader of the Shenandoah community whose outsized life touched many corners of the Commonwealth, died on November 4, 2021; and

WHEREAS, the oldest of 10 children, Warren French was a graduate of Woodstock High School, Massanutten Military Academy, and The University of Virginia, where he earned a degree in electrical engineering; and

WHEREAS, already a student with the V-12 Navy College Training Program when the United States entered World War II, Warren French received accelerated training, left college, and went on to serve in the United States Navy's Pacific campaign as the executive officer of two Landing Craft Infantry assault ships and as captain of another; and

WHEREAS, following his service and the completion of his degree at The University of Virginia in 1947, Warren French worked as an engineer with AT&T Long Lines, first in Washington, D.C., and later in New York City; and

WHEREAS, feeling the pull of his beloved Shenandoah Valley, Warren French left AT&T in 1954 to become the general manager of the Farmers Mutual Telephone System of Shenandoah County; and

WHEREAS, from 1973 to his retirement in 1988, Warren French served as president of the Farmers Mutual Telephone System and its successors, the Shenandoah Telephone Company and later the Shenandoah Telecommunications Company, growing the company five-fold during his tenure; and

WHEREAS, Warren French was dedicated to fostering the independent phone industry and was highly involved with several industry associations on both the state and national level; in recognition of his efforts, he received the Organization for the Protection and Advancement of Small Telephone Companies' President's Award in 1988 and was inducted into the Independent Telecommunications Pioneer Association Hall of Fame in 1993; and

WHEREAS, Warren French was active in politics throughout his life, serving as chairman of the Republican Party of Virginia from 1970 to 1972 and supporting various politicians and campaigns over the years; and

WHEREAS, in recognition of his capable leadership, Warren French received two gubernatorial appointments to The University of Virginia Board of Visitors, and he also served on the boards of Shenandoah Memorial Hospital and Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Virginia; and

WHEREAS, Warren French gave generously of his time with the Woodstock Rotary Club, where he served as president and was a Paul Harris fellow, and as president of the Shenandoah Area Council of the Boy Scouts of America; he was also instrumental to the founding of the Shenandoah County Library and the Shenandoah Community Foundation; and

WHEREAS, guided throughout his life by his faith, Warren French enjoyed worship and fellowship with his community at Woodstock United Methodist Church, where he was a trustee and chairman of the administrative board; and

WHEREAS, preceded in death by his loving wife, Patricia, and his son, Warren III, Warren French will be fondly remembered and dearly missed by his children, Anne, Cynthia, and Christopher, and their families; and by 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 Warren Ballinger French, Jr., whose many contributions to the Shenandoah Valley community and the Commonwealth touched countless lives; and, be it

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

INTRODUCED

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