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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 688

Offered February 14, 2023

Commending Robert B. Lambeth, Jr.

Patrons—Byron, Walker, Bulova, Carr, Clark, Coyner, Hope, Kilgore, Krizek, Lopez, Marshall, Morefield, Mullin, Murphy, Orrock, Rasoul, Sickles, Simon, Subramanyam, Watts and Wilt; Senators: Boysko, Deeds, Ebbin, Favola, Hanger, Hashmi, Howell, McDougale, Peake, Ruff, Saslaw and Spruill

WHEREAS, Robert B. Lambeth, Jr., the innovative and highly respected president of the Council of Independent Colleges in Virginia, will retire as the longest-serving president of a private college consortium in the United States, having made an indelible impact on the lives of hundreds of thousands of students in the Commonwealth; and

WHEREAS, Robert Lambeth is a distinguished 1971 graduate of Randolph-Macon College, a member of the Council of Independent Colleges in Virginia (CICV), which represents 27 accredited, independent nonprofit colleges and universities in the Commonwealth; it was during his time at Randolph-Macon College that he began to understand the importance and value of a small, private college education; and

WHEREAS, after earning his law degree from the University of Richmond, another CICV member, Robert Lambeth initially joined CICV in a part-time capacity, then rose through the ranks to become president in 1983; and

WHEREAS, Robert Lambeth has worked tirelessly to advocate for Virginia's private colleges and universities, with the goal of keeping the Commonwealth's independent higher education institutions affordable and accessible for all Virginians; the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia reports that Virginia's private colleges, and not its public and community college counterparts, actually educate a higher percentage of underrepresented populations; and

WHEREAS, Robert Lambeth championed the development and expansion of the Tuition Assistance Grant program, which has benefited more than 300,000 Virginia students since its inception in 1972, and has been a staunch supporter of increased grant funding, with private college students in the Commonwealth receiving \$4,500 toward their education during the 2022-2023 academic year; in total, more than \$1 billion in grant funding has been provided through the program to Virginia students; and

WHEREAS, Robert Lambeth helped create the Virginia Private Colleges Benefits Consortium, an innovative, self-insured health insurance program that covers 3,300 CICV employees and 6,100 Virginians in all and provides financial stability to CICV member institutions; and

WHEREAS, Robert Lambeth helped orchestrate a program that pooled individual colleges' retirement plans into one multiple employer plan that not only lowered administrative costs but, with \$1 billion in assets, allowed CICV to hire a financial planning firm to do face-to-face financial and retirement consulting with all employees of colleges and universities participating in the plan; the program was the first of its kind in the nation; and

WHEREAS, in 2017, Robert Lambeth was deeply involved in the creation of a solar initiative, funded by the U.S. Department of Energy Sunshot Initiative, a solar grant program that one day will reduce energy bills and the carbon footprint for independent colleges; more recently, he has led efforts to increase collaboration on information technology needs among CICV members; and

WHEREAS, in addition to his outstanding work on behalf of Virginia's independent colleges and universities, Robert Lambeth also has served on numerous higher education and civic boards and advisory committees, including service on the board of the Coalition for College Cost Savings, and he is the former chair of the board of the National Association of Independent College and University State Executives; and

WHEREAS, Robert Lambeth has developed meaningful and highly impactful relationships with local, regional, and state officials while building a network of support for Virginia's private colleges and universities; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commend Robert B. Lambeth, Jr., on the occasion of his retirement as president of the Council of Independent Colleges in Virginia; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to Robert B. Lambeth, Jr., as an expression of the General Assembly's admiration for his highly effective longtime advocacy for the Commonwealth's students and its independent private colleges and universities.

INTRODUCED

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