

2023 SESSION

ENROLLED

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 707

Celebrating the life of the Honorable Charles L. Waddell.

Agreed to by the House of Delegates, February 20, 2023
Agreed to by the Senate, February 22, 2023

WHEREAS, the Honorable Charles L. Waddell, a distinguished public servant who represented the residents of the 33rd District in the Senate of Virginia for nearly three decades and transformed the transportation sector in the Commonwealth, died on July 19, 2022; and

WHEREAS, Charles "Charlie" L. Waddell was born in Georgia and grew up on his family's cotton farm; he developed an interest in government at a young age, after his father began taking him to watch trials and public meetings at the county seat; and

WHEREAS, after graduating high school, Charlie Waddell relocated to Northern Virginia, where he began a long and successful career with American Airlines, and over the next 38 years, he handled crew scheduling and worked as a ramp agent and a customer service assistant; in 1960, he also managed air travel logistics for Richard Nixon's first presidential campaign; and

WHEREAS, that same year, Charlie Waddell settled in eastern Loudoun County with his first wife, the late Marie Waddell; he pursued a career in politics as a member of the Loudoun Democratic Committee and ultimately became chair of the organization; and

WHEREAS, in 1967, Charlie Waddell was elected to the Loudoun County Board of Supervisors, defeating a longtime incumbent in the primary, and proudly kept his campaign promise to help provide free textbooks to children in local public schools; and

WHEREAS, desirous to be of further service to the Commonwealth, Charlie Waddell ran for and was elected to the Senate of Virginia in 1971 and represented the residents of Loudoun County and part of western Fairfax County in the 33rd District until 1998; and

WHEREAS, during his tenure as a state lawmaker, Charlie Waddell introduced and supported many important pieces of legislation to benefit all Virginians, including bills to enhance access to buildings for people with disabilities, create a land-use tax to preserve land in agriculture, require sprinklers in high-rise buildings, and establish a presumption that heart and lung ailments suffered by public safety officials resulted from their service; and

WHEREAS, as chair of the Senate Transportation Committee, Charlie Waddell played a major role in roadway improvements in Northern Virginia and enhancements to the transportation sector throughout the Commonwealth; he led efforts to widen Route 28, authorized construction of the Dulles Greenway and raised its speed limit to 65 miles per hour, required auto repair facilities to offer written estimates, and legalized right turns on red in the Commonwealth; and

WHEREAS, Charlie Waddell helped obtain funding for the Sterling campus of Northern Virginia Community College and the preservation of George C. Marshall's home in Leesburg, and he guided decisions to locate the National Guard Armory and the Marion DuPont Scott Equine Medical Center in Loudoun County; and

WHEREAS, in 1998, Charlie Waddell was appointed as deputy secretary of transportation under Governor James S. Gilmore III; that same year, he married his second wife, Jane Rankin Herring, whose son, the Honorable Mark Herring, later followed in Charlie Waddell's footsteps as the senator for the 33rd District from 2006 to 2014; and

WHEREAS, Charlie Waddell subsequently served two years on the Virginia Parole Board before his well-earned retirement from public life; and

WHEREAS, known to many as the singing senator, Charlie Waddell often delighted audiences at campaign events or other public appearances by singing country and bluegrass songs, particularly "Wabash Cannonball," into which he frequently ad-libbed lyrics to fit the occasion; and

WHEREAS, predeceased by his second wife, Jane, Charlie Waddell will be fondly remembered and greatly missed by his children, Jeffrey, Gregory, and Scott, and their families; his stepchildren, Susan and Mark, and their families; and numerous other family members, friends, and colleagues on both sides of the aisle; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly hereby note with great sadness the loss of the Honorable Charles L. Waddell, a dedicated public servant who made numerous contributions to Northern Virginia and the Commonwealth as a whole; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the family of the Honorable Charles L. Waddell as an expression of the General Assembly's respect for his memory.

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