

23101634D

## SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 279

Offered January 23, 2023

*Commending the Honorable Mitchell I. Mutnick.*

Patrons—Surovell and McDougle

WHEREAS, the Honorable Mitchell I. Mutnick retired as a judge of the Fairfax County General District Court of the 19th Judicial District of Virginia, after more than 18 years of outstanding service to the Commonwealth; and

WHEREAS, a graduate of American University, Mitchell Mutnick began his career as a budget analyst in the Congressional Budget Office while he was pursuing a law degree from what is now the Antonin Scalia Law School at George Mason University; and

WHEREAS, during that time Mitchell Mutnick helped develop innovative budget tracking systems and a computer-based system for tracking the expiration dates of sunset provisions in legislation; he also helped draft several publications on the federal budget process and was a lecturer on budget issues; and

WHEREAS, beginning in 1984, Mitchell Mutnick worked as an attorney in private practice; he participated in more than 100 jury trials and served as counsel to several hundred court-appointed cases prior to the creation of the public defender's office; and

WHEREAS, a trusted advocate for people in need, Mitchell Mutnick served as a court-appointed guardian to more than 30 incapacitated adults and was a guardian ad litem for 19 years; and

WHEREAS, Mitchell Mutnick subsequently established bankruptcy and domestic relations practices, as well as a title and escrow company that performed more than 200 transactions per year and later merged with a larger firm for whom he became legal counsel; and

WHEREAS, Mitchell Mutnick was appointed as a substitute judge in 2002 and was appointed as a judge of the Fairfax County General District Court in 2004; and

WHEREAS, Mitchell Mutnick presided over the court with great fairness and wisdom and implemented numerous programs that allowed the court to better serve the public; and

WHEREAS, Mitchell Mutnick helped create a tracking system to account for defendants that had been sent to Western State Hospital for mental health evaluations and ensure that their cases returned to the docket in a timely manner, a precursor to the current Compliance and Competency Docket in the Diversion First initiative; and

WHEREAS, Mitchell Mutnick created new procedures for pretrial review to limit the number of individuals who had been arrested and awaiting trial for four days or more during holiday weekends; he also created an advisement docket to ensure that defendants in driving while impaired (DWI) cases were either appointed an attorney or retained an attorney within two weeks of their arrest, reducing the average trial time by two months; and

WHEREAS, during the COVID-19 pandemic, Mitchell Mutnick obtained supplies and built protective barriers for clerks and staff members and developed procedures to facilitate safe reopening of the courts, including the use of video systems to facilitate communication between the courts and the local jail; and

WHEREAS, Mitchell Mutnick acquired funding for an Online Dispute Resolution pilot program for small claims court that allows litigants to communicate and resolve disputes online; the program significantly increased access to the justice system and is being considered statewide; and

WHEREAS, outside of his career, Mitchell Mutnick has mentored young people as a leader in local youth athletics programs and worked with the Mount Vernon Yacht Club to support programs benefiting the health of the Potomac River and the Chesapeake Bay; and

WHEREAS, Mitchell Mutnick has also served the nation for more than 40 years as an officer of the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary and has provided legal counsel, participated in search and rescue operations, and performed thousands of hours of maritime patrols; and

WHEREAS, Mitchell Mutnick served the Fairfax County community and the Commonwealth with the utmost dedication, integrity, and distinction, and he will seek new opportunities to enhance the quality of life in the region after his well-earned retirement; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commend the Honorable Mitchell I. Mutnick on the occasion of his retirement as a judge; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the Honorable Mitchell I. Mutnick as an expression of the General Assembly's admiration for his personal and professional achievements.

INTRODUCED

SJ279