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SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 141

Offered February 16, 2023

Celebrating the life of James C. Wofford.

Patron—Vogel

WHEREAS, James C. Wofford, a respected leader in equestrian sports who represented the United States in Olympic Games and other international competitions and inspired generations of athletes as a coach and mentor, died on February 2, 2023; and

WHEREAS, James "Jimmy" Wofford was born in Kansas to a family of equestrian athletes; his father, John W. Wofford, was a founding member of the United States Equestrian Team (USET), and his brothers both competed in international horseback riding events; and

WHEREAS, Jimmy Wofford graduated from Culver Military Academy and the School of Business at the University of Colorado, and at the age of 19, he traveled to Hamilton Farm in New Jersey to train with the USET; and

WHEREAS, Jimmy Wofford first competed with the U.S. Eventing Team in 1965 and became a member of the USET's three-day event squad for the next two decades; aboard his famed Irish Sport Horse, Kilkenny, he earned a team gold medal at the 1967 Pan American Games, team silver medals at the 1968 Summer Olympics and the 1972 Summer Olympics, and individual and team bronze medals at the World Eventing Championships in 1970 and 1978, respectively; and

WHEREAS, during the height of his career, Jimmy Wofford was also an avid foxhunter and steeplechase jockey; and

WHEREAS, Jimmy Wofford began coaching in 1978 and became a full-time coach after his official retirement in 1986; he helped dozens of equestrian athletes realize their dream to compete on the international stage; and

WHEREAS, from 1978 until the time of his passing, at least one rider on every U.S. Olympic, World Championship, and Pan American equestrian team had trained under Jimmy Wofford; and

WHEREAS, over the years, Jimmy Wofford offered his leadership and expertise to several equestrian sports organizations; he became the first professional horseman to serve as president of the American Horse Show Association, now the U.S. Equestrian Federation (USEF), and served USET as a vice president, senior vice president, and member of its Board of Trustees; and

WHEREAS, Jimmy Wofford was a sought-after speaker, clinician, and coach and authored multiple books and articles on horsemanship; he earned many accolades over the course of his career, including induction into the United States Eventing Association's Hall of Fame in 2003 and the USEF Lifetime Achievement Award in 2012; and

WHEREAS, Jimmy Wofford will be fondly remembered and greatly missed by his wife of 56 years, Gail; his daughters, Hilary and Jennifer, and their families; and numerous other family members and friends; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the Senate of Virginia hereby note with great sadness the loss of James C. Wofford, a skilled horseman who reshaped equestrian sports in the United States; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the family of James C. Wofford as an expression of the Senate of Virginia's respect for his memory.

INTRODUCED

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