

2024 SESSION

ENROLLED

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 351

Celebrating the life of Serafim C. Canavos.

Agreed to by the House of Delegates, March 7, 2024

WHEREAS, Serafim C. Canavos, a successful and enterprising restaurateur and businessman and an active and beloved member of the Virginia Peninsula community, died on August 13, 2023; and

WHEREAS, a proud son of Newport News, Serafim "Sammy" C. Canavos spent his youth in Greece and endured the tribulations of World War II before returning to the United States and joining his father at his family's restaurant, Washington Lunch, in downtown Newport News; and

WHEREAS, after founding his first restaurant in 1952, Sammy Canavos would go on to establish several other restaurants, both independently and in partnership with family, throughout the Virginia Peninsula, including Sammy's Steak House in Newport News, Sammy and Nick's in Hampton, and Capitol Pancake House in Williamsburg; and

WHEREAS, a master of both business and hospitality, Sammy Canavos entered the hotel industry in 1985 with the construction of a 100-room Howard Johnson hotel in Williamsburg and would go on to develop other customer service-oriented commercial real estate projects throughout his career; and

WHEREAS, Sammy Canavos was a kind and generous mentor to his employees and fellow restaurateurs, helping several of them establish restaurants of their own, and supported his industry by serving as a board member and president of the Virginia Restaurant Association; and

WHEREAS, Sammy Canavos' service to the community extended to his work with various state and local organizations, including the Boys & Girls Clubs of the Virginia Peninsula, the NationsBank Advisory Board, and the National Conference for Community and Justice; and

WHEREAS, for 34 years, Sammy Canavos provided the food and labor for the Boys & Girls Clubs of the Virginia Peninsula's Annual Steak 'N Burger Dinner, raising millions of dollars to support young people in the area; and

WHEREAS, Sammy Canavos was the recipient of various honors and accolades throughout his life in recognition of his legacy of service to the community, including the Medallion Award from the Boys & Girls Clubs of America and the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Boys & Girls Clubs of the Virginia Peninsula; he was also notably inducted into the latter's Wall of Fame; and

WHEREAS, guided by his deep and abiding faith, Sammy Canavos was an active member of Saints Constantine & Helen Greek Orthodox Church in Newport News and served several terms on its Parish Council; and

WHEREAS, Sammy Canavos will be fondly remembered and dearly missed by his loving wife of 61 years, Angeliki; his children, Chris, Dean, and Alexis, and their families; and numerous other family members and friends; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the House of Delegates hereby note with great sadness the loss of Serafim C. Canavos, a treasured member of the Virginia Peninsula community whose munificent spirit and love for his country and community were an inspiration to all who knew him; 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 Serafim C. Canavos as an expression of the House of Delegates' respect for his memory.

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