

24107324D

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 134

Offered February 23, 2024

Commending Colonel Elizabeth A. Sydow.

Patrons—Reeves, Boysko, Diggs, Durant, McDougale, Salim and Stuart; Delegates: Ballard, Clark, Cole, Ennis, Fowler, Green, Martinez, Milde, Morefield, Obenshain, Owen, Rasoul, Scott, P.A., Ware, Watts and Wyatt

WHEREAS, Colonel Elizabeth A. Sydow, who has served as the commander of the Virginia Wing of the Civil Air Patrol, U.S. Air Force Auxiliary since April 11, 2021, will relinquish her command on April 6, 2024; and

WHEREAS, Colonel Sydow broke barriers when she was selected and appointed as the first female wing commander for the Virginia Wing of the Civil Air Patrol, U.S. Air Force Auxiliary (the Virginia Wing); and

WHEREAS, under her leadership, the Virginia Wing saw tremendous growth, with a 47 percent increase in cadet membership and 13 percent increase in adult membership; the Virginia Wing now has more members than at any other time in the 21st century; and

WHEREAS, Colonel Sydow's focus ensured that the Virginia Wing was well-trained and equipped, and she enabled the Virginia Wing to earn an effective rating during its 2024 compliance inspection with a number of superior programs identified; and

WHEREAS, the Virginia Wing was recognized during all three years of Colonel Sydow's command for superior performance in the Civil Air Patrol's missions; in particular, it was recognized all three years for its work in disaster relief; and

WHEREAS, as a direct result of Colonel Sydow's leadership and the partnerships she fostered, the Virginia Wing supported disaster relief efforts during the COVID-19 pandemic at the state and local levels, with volunteers collectively contributing more than 470 days of work and handling more than 430,000 pounds of bulk food, medical supplies, and community support goods over a nine-month period; and

WHEREAS, under Colonel Sydow's command, the Virginia Wing responded to the winter storm in February 2021, Hurricane Ida damage assessment in September 2021, and Kentucky floods damage assessment in August 2022; the Virginia Wing executed aerial photography, on-the-ground assessments, and online geospatial damage assessments to support FEMA's disaster response; and

WHEREAS, Colonel Sydow oversaw the expansion of the Virginia Wing's small unmanned aerial systems capabilities and the achievement of full operational capability, with cadets integrated into mission teams as pilots and technicians, enhancing capabilities for disaster response and aerospace education outreach; and

WHEREAS, under Colonel Sydow's leadership, the Virginia Wing flew orientation flights for over 500 cadets in 2021, a 50 percent increase from 2020; 15 cadets received flight instruction in 2022, with nine soloing and two earning their private pilot licenses; and

WHEREAS, under Colonel Sydow's command, the Virginia Wing produced nine Spaatz Award winners, the highest cadet achievement award attainable, earned by less than one percent of the nation's cadets; and

WHEREAS, Colonel Sydow helped the Virginia Wing earn recognition in the National Aerospace Education High-Altitude Balloon Challenge multiple years, including the Kittinger Cup as the overall winner in 2022 for the William P. Knight Composite Squadron's experiment on the effectiveness of diabetes test strips at high altitudes; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commend Colonel Elizabeth A. Sydow for her commitment to the Commonwealth and the nation during her tour as the commander of the Virginia Wing of the Civil Air Patrol, U.S. Air Force Auxiliary; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to Colonel Elizabeth A. Sydow as an expression of the General Assembly's admiration for her dedication and assistance to the Commonwealth.

INTRODUCED

SJ134