

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 151

Commending Mark E. Smith.

Agreed to by the Senate, February 29, 2024
Agreed to by the House of Delegates, March 1, 2024

WHEREAS, Mark E. Smith, who served the Commonwealth in various capacities for nearly 45 years, celebrated his retirement from state service on December 24, 2023; and

WHEREAS, Mark Smith served as chief liaison between George Mason University (GMU) and government entities of the Commonwealth, including elected and appointed officials in the executive and legislative branches, as well as numerous state agencies that interface with the university; and

WHEREAS, in concert with GMU's leadership team, Mark Smith established the university's legislative priorities and planned and executed strategies to advance GMU's interests in Richmond year-round; and

WHEREAS, Mark Smith secured several key priorities for GMU, including the capital projects that delivered Peterson Family Health Sciences Hall, Horizon Hall, the Fuse Building, and the Life Sciences and Engineering Building; and

WHEREAS, Mark Smith worked to secure pay raises and increases in operating funds; his effort to deliver significant increases in financial aid at levels previously unseen in the Commonwealth was perhaps his greatest success; and

WHEREAS, Mark Smith joined GMU as executive director of state government relations in August of 2013, having previously spent nearly two decades leading government relations efforts at Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU); and

WHEREAS, in addition to his experience in academia, Mark Smith completed an additional decade of service to the Commonwealth as assistant secretary of education, executive assistant for the Secretary of Transportation and Public Safety, division administrative manager in the Attorney General's Office, and as a staffer for both the House Clerk's Office and Senate Clerk's Office, which are responsible for the daily operations of the General Assembly; and

WHEREAS, Mark Smith's career in public service began as an intern in the Lieutenant Governor's Office in the summer of 1979 and culminated in the 2023 Session of the General Assembly, the 44th session in which he served; and

WHEREAS, Mark Smith is active in his community as a member of the advisory committee for the Commonwealth of Virginia Campaign and as a member of the Review Committee for the Virginia State Employee Emergency Fund; and

WHEREAS, Mark Smith served on the Virginia Board of Conservation and Recreation, the advisory committee for the YMCA Model General Assembly, the Virginia YMCA Board of Directors, and the National Kidney Foundation and its Virginia affiliate; and

WHEREAS, Mark Smith graduated with honors from VCU with a major in administration of justice and public safety and a minor in political science; he later earned a master's degree from VCU in public administration; and

WHEREAS, Mark Smith served his community and the Commonwealth with the utmost integrity, dedication, and distinction, and he has earned several awards for distinguished leadership, including recognition from the Richmond Jaycees; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commend Mark E. Smith on the occasion of his retirement; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to Mark E. Smith as an expression of the General Assembly's admiration for his legacy of contributions to the Commonwealth.

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