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HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 218

Offered March 10, 2022

Commending Reinhardt Gray.

Patron—Tran

WHEREAS, Reinhardt Gray, esteemed park manager of Mason Neck State Park in Fairfax County and a valued member of Virginia State Parks, retired on January 9, 2022; and

WHEREAS, raised in Newport News, Reinhardt Gray began his career in law enforcement with the Virginia State Police, serving for some time as a trooper and with the Bureau of Criminal Investigations; he also served as a U.S. postal inspector and as a supervisor of the Federal Air Marshal Service; and

WHEREAS, Reinhardt Gray began his tenure with Virginia State Parks in 2011 as a park ranger at Belle Isle State Park in Lancaster County and was quickly promoted to assistant manager at Leesylvania State Park in Prince William County the following year; and

WHEREAS, in his one-and-a-half years in that position, Reinhardt Gray established a strong relationship with the Boys and Girls Clubs of Greater Washington, giving underserved children in the community the opportunity to participate in the Great American Campout, as they were hosted at the park for a weekend of camping and outdoor activities; and

WHEREAS, in recognition of his professionalism and leadership abilities, Reinhardt Gray was elevated to park manager of High Bridge Trail State Park, a rails to trails park that consists of a 26-mile long trail that passes through five different communities; in addition to establishing new roads and parking lots, an essential part of Reinhardt Gray's work was focused on working with the various communities surrounding the park; and

WHEREAS, Reinhardt Gray finished his career with Virginia State Parks as park manager of Mason Neck State Park from 2014 until his retirement, where he was instrumental in forming a coalition that became a support structure for sharing resources and ideas, leading to better experiences for the many thousands of people who visit Mason Neck each year; and

WHEREAS, Reinhardt Gray also built an exceptional partnership with the Friends of Mason Neck State Park, Inc., a nonprofit organization that supports the park's mission; and

WHEREAS, working with the Friends of Mason Neck State Park and local garden clubs, Reinhardt Gray was able to open the Junior Rangers program to children of low-income families who otherwise would not have access to these activities; and

WHEREAS, Mason Neck State Park's signature event is the annual Eagle Festival, a day of free, family-friendly activities focused on environmental awareness; Reinhardt Gray, with support from the Friends of Mason Neck State Park and sponsors, was able to broaden the reach and content of this event, welcoming and educating as many as 5,000 guests; and

WHEREAS, while park manager of Mason Neck State Park, Reinhardt Gray oversaw a park beloved by residents of Northern Virginia for the plethora of outdoor activities and programs it has to offer, including hiking, canoeing, and bird-watching; and

WHEREAS, Reinhardt Gray's responsibilities as park manager of Mason Neck State Park also included stewardship of the park's wetlands, forest, open water, ponds, and open fields, enabling future environmental studies and wildlife observation; and

WHEREAS, Reinhardt Gray has led law-enforcement training for Virginia State Parks and has worked with groups around the country and the world to help them with issues involving evidence control, presenting best practices and teaching others how to implement them; and

WHEREAS, when asked what motivates him to work hard, Reinhardt Gray responded that he wanted to do the right thing all the time and make sure everyone has a fair shot; and

WHEREAS, in his retirement, Reinhardt Gray plans to continue helping the Commonwealth part-time by assisting the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services with its accreditation program, while spending much deserved quality time with his four children and two grandchildren and training for and running ultramarathons; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, That Reinhardt Gray hereby be commended upon his retirement as park manager of Mason Neck State Park; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to Reinhardt Gray as an expression of the House of Delegates' admiration for his contributions to the Commonwealth and best wishes for his future endeavors.

INTRODUCED

HR218