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## HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 2

Offered January 12, 2022

Prefiled January 10, 2022

*Commending the Honorable M. Kirkland Cox.*

Patrons—Cherry, Gilbert, Adams, D.M., Anderson, Avoli, Ballard, Batten, Bell, Byron, Campbell, R.R., Carr, Cordoza, Coyner, Davis, Edmunds, Fowler, Kilgore, Knight, Krizek, March, McNamara, Morefield, Robinson, Runion, Scott, P., Wachsmann, Walker and Wright

WHEREAS, the Honorable M. Kirkland Cox, a respected educator who inspired countless young people in the Tri-City area, served the Commonwealth for more than three decades as a member of the House of Delegates, including two sessions as Speaker of the House; and

WHEREAS, Kirkland "Kirk" Cox grew up in Colonial Heights and holds degrees from James Madison University and the Richard Bland College of William and Mary; he followed in his mother's footsteps as an educator, teaching middle school and high school special education and civics and government courses for many years until his retirement in 2012; and

WHEREAS, desirous to be of further service to his community and the Commonwealth, Kirk Cox ran for and was elected to the House of Delegates in 1989 and represented the residents of Colonial Heights and part of Chesterfield County in the 66th District for more than 30 years; and

WHEREAS, as a state lawmaker, Kirk Cox was one of the foremost supporters of veterans and their families in the Commonwealth, introducing more than 120 pieces of relevant legislation; and

WHEREAS, Kirk Cox was one of the first legislators in the nation to introduce legislation granting tax relief for soldiers serving in Bosnia and introduced successful legislation to expand the Sitter & Barfoot Veterans Care Center in Richmond and construct the Jones & Cabacoy Veterans Care Center in Virginia Beach and the Puller Veterans Care Center in Fauquier County; and

WHEREAS, Kirk Cox helped create the Virginia Growth and Opportunity Board, a business-driven initiative that facilitates greater collaboration between the business community, higher education, and local governments, and the Online Virginia Network, a consortium of state universities offering a one-stop shop for scheduling, registering for, and attending online classes; and

WHEREAS, Kirk Cox sought to increase funding for community-based services for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and helped create a statewide pilot program for addiction recovery programs; and

WHEREAS, Kirk Cox offered his leadership and expertise to the House Committees on the Chesapeake and Its Tributaries, on Conservation and Natural Resources, on Agriculture, Chesapeake and Natural Resources, and on Rules, as well as the Joint Committee on Rules and the Select Committee on School Safety; and

WHEREAS, Kirk Cox also served as chair of the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission, War of 1812 Commission, the WWI and WWII Commemoration Commission, the Virginia Council on the Interstate Compact on Education Opportunities for Military Children, the Jamestown-Yorktown Foundation, and the American Revolution 2019 Commemoration Commission; and

WHEREAS, Kirk Cox ably served as House Majority Whip from 2004 to 2010 and House Majority Leader from 2010 to 2018, then was unanimously elected as the 55th Speaker of the House of Delegates from 2018 to 2020; and

WHEREAS, Kirk Cox was the first resident of Colonial Heights, the first graduate of James Madison University, and the first public school teacher to become Speaker of the House of Delegates; and

WHEREAS, during his tenure as Speaker, Kirk Cox implemented paid parental leave for all House of Delegates employees, increased transparency by ensuring that committee meetings were live-streamed, and presided over the 400th anniversary of the founding of the House of Burgesses; and

WHEREAS, Kirk Cox has served the Commonwealth with the utmost professionalism, integrity, and dedication and looks forward to seeking new opportunities to serve his community; and

WHEREAS, in all his endeavors, Kirk Cox enjoys the love and support of his wife, Julia Kirkendall Cox, and their four sons, Lane, Carter, Blake, and Cameron; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, That the Honorable M. Kirkland Cox hereby be commended for his outstanding contributions to the residents of the 66th District and the Commonwealth; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the Honorable M. Kirkland Cox as an expression of the House of Delegates' admiration for his achievements on behalf of his fellow Virginians.

INTRODUCED

HR2