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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 114

Offered January 17, 2022

Celebrating the life of the Honorable Arthur R. Giesen, Jr.

Patrons—Runion, Avoli, Campbell, R.R., Adams, D.M., Ballard, Bulova, Convirs-Fowler, Fowler, Gilbert, Glass, Hodges, Hope, Jenkins, Keam, Maldonado, Orrock, Rasoul, Reid, Roem, Simonds, Sullivan, Watts, Willett, Williams, Wright and Wyatt; Senators: Barker, Boysko, Deeds, Hanger, Howell, Obenshain, Ruff, Saslaw, Spruill and Surovell

WHEREAS, the Honorable Arthur R. Giesen, Jr., a former member of the Virginia House of Delegates who ably represented communities in the Blue Ridge Mountains for more than 30 years, died on April 2, 2021; and

WHEREAS, a native of Radford, Arthur "Pete" R. Giesen, Jr., excelled in both academics and athletics in his youth; he graduated from Radford High School and earned a bachelor's degree from Yale University and a master's degree from Harvard University; and

WHEREAS, after completing his education, Pete Giesen relocated to Staunton, where he worked for Westinghouse Electric Corporation, then subsequently founded and served as president of Augusta Steel Corporation; and

WHEREAS, Pete Giesen followed in the footsteps of his father and grandfather, both former mayors of Radford, and his mother, the first woman elected to the Virginia House of Delegates as a Republican, and pursued a life of public service, running for a seat in the Virginia House of Delegates in 1963; and

WHEREAS, Pete Giesen represented the residents of the 10th District from 1964 to 1972, the 15th District from 1972 to 1982, the 10th District from 1982 to 1983, and the 25th District from 1983 to 1996; and

WHEREAS, during his tenure as a state lawmaker, Pete Giesen introduced and supported numerous important pieces of legislation to benefit all Virginians, taking a particular interest in racial equality and mental health; he earned the nickname "the Mediator of Virginia Politics" for his commitment to building bipartisan consensus and understanding; and

WHEREAS, Pete Giesen later served as a legislative liaison for several nonprofit organizations and local governments, as well as James Madison University; from 2007 to 2020, he shared his wise insights on local and state politics as a political science professor at the university; and

WHEREAS, Pete Giesen enjoyed fellowship and worship with the congregation of Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church in Staunton and volunteered his time and leadership with many civic and service organizations; he established the Pete Giesen Mental Health Golf Tournament, which supported scholarships students majoring in mental health fields at Blue Ridge Community College; and

WHEREAS, predeceased by his daughter, Beth Sauer-Holmes, Pete Giesen will be fondly remembered and greatly missed by his wife, Pat; his children, Ann Smith, Beth Esterling, Mary Tucker, Jay Giesen, Jon Giesen, Robert Giesen, Kim Elliot, and Amy Elliot, and their families; and numerous other family members, friends, and colleagues on both sides of the aisle; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly hereby note with great sadness the loss of the Honorable Arthur R. Giesen, Jr., a dedicated public servant, community leader, and educator; 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 the Honorable Arthur R. Giesen, Jr., as an expression of the General Assembly's respect for his memory.

INTRODUCED

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