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SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 137

Offered February 18, 2022

Celebrating the life of the Honorable Helen Marie Taylor.

Patrons—Reeves, Boysko, Ebbin, Hashmi, Howell, Ruff and Spruill; Delegates: Adams, D.M., Austin, Avoli, Carr, Keam, McGuire, Rasoul, Reid, Ware, Watts, Willett and Williams

WHEREAS, the Honorable Helen Marie Taylor, a longtime resident of Richmond and Orange, a talented actress, a passionate advocate for historic preservation, and former representative of the United States at the United Nations, died on January 25, 2022; and

WHEREAS, a native of Waco, Texas, Helen Taylor graduated from Baylor University and the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art in London, England; and

WHEREAS, during World War II, Helen Taylor served as the entertainment director for the Seventh United States Army, and, upon returning to the United States, she pursued a career in the performing arts, appearing in numerous Shakespearean plays, including an award-winning performance as Ophelia in "Hamlet"; and

WHEREAS, Helen Taylor also taught Shakespeare at the American Academy of Dramatic Arts and was the founder of theatre companies throughout the country, as well as a member of the Association of Producing Artists in New York; and

WHEREAS, for more than 50 years, Helen Taylor lived on Monument Avenue in Richmond, and in 1968, she famously stood in front of paving machines attempting to lay asphalt over the original cobblestones; as a result, the city abandoned the project and the historic street designs were preserved for years to come; and

WHEREAS, Helen Taylor also spent time at her family home, Bloomsbury, in Orange, where she cofounded the James Madison Museum of Orange County Heritage; her visionary leadership also led to the establishment of the nearby museum at James Madison's Montpelier, and she received the organization's first and only lifetime membership in 2009; and

WHEREAS, in 1983, President Ronald Reagan selected Helen Taylor as the United States delegate to the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization meeting in Paris, and she served as a United States representative to the United Nations from 1986 to 1987; and

WHEREAS, Helen Taylor offered her wisdom and expertise to a number of civic organizations and conservative groups, serving as vice president of the Eagle Forum for more than 40 years; and

WHEREAS, in the late 1980s, Helen Taylor returned to her hometown of Waco and purchased the former Barron Springs Elementary School, preserving both the school and the historically significant sites related to the Waco Indians on the surrounding land; the facility reopened in 1993 as the Helen Marie Taylor Museum of Waco History and offers a wide range of exhibits celebrating local and national heritage; and

WHEREAS, predeceased by her first husband, George Barber Munroe, and her second husband, Jaquelin Erasmus Taylor, and two sons, Jaquelin Pendleton Taylor and Ralph William Taylor, Helen Taylor will be fondly remembered and greatly missed by her sons, Howell Taylor and George Taylor, and their families, and numerous other family members and friends; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the General Assembly hereby note with great sadness the loss of the Honorable Helen Marie Taylor; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the family of the Honorable Helen Marie Taylor as an expression of the General Assembly's respect for her memory.

INTRODUCED

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