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1 **HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 750**

2 Offered June 27, 2024

3 *Celebrating the life of Joseph Henry Seipel.*4 _____
5 Patron—6 WHEREAS, Joseph Henry Seipel, a renowned sculptor whose transformational tenure as dean of the
7 Virginia Commonwealth University School of the Arts brought the institution to the forefront of graduate arts
8 programs around the country, died on June 12, 2024; and9 WHEREAS, Joseph Seipel grew up in Sheboygan, Wisconsin, and began studying sculpture at the
10 University of Wisconsin-Madison; he subsequently earned a master's degree from the Maryland Institute
11 College of Art's Rinehart School of Sculpture; and12 WHEREAS, Joseph Seipel first joined the faculty of Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) in 1974
13 as a sculpture instructor; he became known for his colossal ceramic works, demonstrating to his students that
14 they could achieve their dreams, no matter how great; and15 WHEREAS, Joseph Seipel served as a professor and chair of the Department of Sculpture for several
16 years while also staying active in the Richmond community as the founder of the artist-run 1708 Gallery and
17 co-founder of a restaurant in the Fan District; and18 WHEREAS, in 2001, Joseph Seipel was selected as the senior associate dean of the VCU School of the
19 Arts and served in that capacity until 2009 when he became the dean of the Savannah College of Art and
20 Design; and21 WHEREAS, Joseph Seipel returned to Richmond in 2011 as dean of the VCU School of the Arts and led
22 efforts that transformed the Richmond community and brought the school to national prominence; and23 WHEREAS, Joseph Seipel took on leadership roles in national and international organizations, where he
24 raised awareness of VCU's exceptional arts programs; he also expanded course offerings to include digital
25 media to bring new generations of artists to the school and held parties to showcase student artwork; and26 WHEREAS, believing firmly that the arts are a foundational aspect of multiple disciplines, Joseph Seipel
27 built a culture of creativity and collaboration across the entire university and health system and was admired
28 by students and his peers alike for his wit, compassion, and dedication; and29 WHEREAS, Joseph Seipel was also responsible for several renovation and construction projects at VCU,
30 leading the revitalization of the Depot Building, which houses classrooms, studios, and a student gallery, and
31 the design, planning, and fundraising for the Institute for Contemporary Art at VCU; and32 WHEREAS, among many awards and accolades, Joseph Seipel received the Lifetime Achievement
33 Award from the International Sculpture Center, the Theresa Pollak Lifetime Achievement Award from
34 Richmond Magazine, and the 2018 Person of the Year award from the Richmond Times-Dispatch; and35 WHEREAS, after retiring from the VCU School of the Arts, Joseph Seipel briefly served as interim
36 director of the Fashion Institute of Technology in New York, then opened two studios in Richmond and
37 returned to creating art full time; and38 WHEREAS, Joseph Seipel will be fondly remembered and greatly missed by his wife, Suzanne; his
39 daughter, Chloe, and her family; his siblings, Marlene and Ken; and numerous other family members and
40 friends; now, therefore, be it41 RESOLVED, That the House of Delegates hereby note with great sadness the loss of Joseph Henry
42 Seipel, the distinguished former dean of the Virginia Commonwealth University School of the Arts; and, be it43 RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for
44 presentation to the family of Joseph Henry Seipel as an expression of the House of Delegates' respect for his
45 memory.

INTRODUCED

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