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1 SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 221
2 Offered January 27, 20253 *Commending Emma Randel.*4 _____
5 Patron—French6 WHEREAS, Emma Randel, founder of Shenandoah Vineyards, which is now the oldest continually
7 operating vineyard in Virginia, was a pioneer in the development of the Commonwealth's thriving, award-
8 winning wine industry; and9 WHEREAS, Emma Randel grew up in the Shenandoah Valley and returned home to her family's farm in
10 Edinburg after graduating from Duke University, working as a teacher in a secretarial school, marrying her
11 husband, Jim, and raising five children; and12 WHEREAS, in 1976, Emma Randel planted 5,000 grapevines as a hobby and a pseudo-retirement plan on
13 her family's land, which had been a working farm since the 1700s; and14 WHEREAS, at the time, the Commonwealth was not considered suitable for winemaking, but as Emma
15 Randel's knowledge of the local climate, soil conditions, and viticulture grew, she began to see the region's
16 potential and opened Shenandoah Vineyards in 1979; and17 WHEREAS, three years later, Emma Randel led efforts to establish the Shenandoah Valley as the
18 Commonwealth's first federally recognized wine-producing region with an American Viticultural Area
19 designation; and20 WHEREAS, Emma Randel's accomplishments helped legitimize the Commonwealth as a wine producer
21 on the international stage and led the way for the development of more than 300 other wineries representing
22 more than 5,000 acres of grapes; and23 WHEREAS, Emma Randel continued to manage Shenandoah Vineyards into her 90s before retiring in
24 2018; the winery is currently owned and operated by Michael Shaps Wineworks and continues to produce
25 award-winning wines that are enjoyed throughout the Commonwealth, the United States, and the world; and26 WHEREAS, among many awards and accolades over the course of her career, Emma Randel received the
27 Virginia Women in Wine Trailblazer Award in 2024; now, therefore, be it28 RESOLVED by the Senate of Virginia, That Emma Randel hereby be commended for her
29 transformational contributions to the Commonwealth's wine industry as the founder of Shenandoah
30 Vineyards; and, be it31 RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to
32 Emma Randel as an expression of the Senate of Virginia's admiration for her legacy of personal and
33 professional achievements.

INTRODUCED

SR221