

25106697D

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 645

Offered February 12, 2025

Commending John Edward Burton III.

Patrons—Austin, Davis, Marshall, Phillips and Wright

WHEREAS, John Edward Burton III, a former professional stock car racing driver, has given generously his time and talents to support conservation in the Commonwealth and the United States through the Ward Burton Wildlife Foundation; and

WHEREAS, John Edward “Ward” Burton III was born in Danville and grew up in South Boston; his family has deep roots in the Commonwealth, stretching back to the arrival of his ancestor, Richard Burton, at the Jamestown Colony; and

WHEREAS, Ward Burton began driving in the NASCAR Busch Series in 1990, then moved up to the NASCAR Winston Cup Series in 1994; he earned five wins in the NASCAR Winston Cup Series, including the 2001 Southern 500 and the 2002 Daytona 500, as well as four wins in the NASCAR Xfinity Series over the course of his racing career; and

WHEREAS, in 2003, Ward Burton began working as a spokesman for Virginia State Parks, and in 2005, then-Governor Mark Warner appointed him to the Virginia Board of Game and Inland Fisheries; and

WHEREAS, Ward Burton is the founder of the Ward Burton Wildlife Foundation, which promotes sustainability of natural resources through conservation, land management, outdoor outreach, and educational practices; and

WHEREAS, the Ward Burton Wildlife Foundation partners with local, state, and federal organizations, as well as landowners, to manage habitats for endangered species, promote wise forestry management and stream water mitigation, address invasive plant growth, and preserve the integrity of the land; and

WHEREAS, the Ward Burton Wildlife Foundation coordinates with the Army National Guard to support environmental resiliency through the Readiness and Environmental Protection Integration program; and

WHEREAS, the Ward Burton Wildlife Foundation hosts events for veterans through partnerships with the USO, Wounded Warrior Project, and Project Healing Waters to honor those who have served and sacrificed in defense of the nation; and

WHEREAS, the Ward Burton Wildlife Foundation provides youth outdoor education experiences for children of all ages and has visited more than 120 schools to help young people develop an appreciation for the importance of conservation; the organization hosted an advanced archaeology class from Longwood University at the Sanders Dig Site in Halifax County, combining environmental conservation efforts with historical and cultural preservation; and

WHEREAS, the Ward Burton Wildlife Foundation also works directly with the Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources Conservation Police K9 Program to ensure public safety, along with protecting natural habitats and wildlife; and

WHEREAS, Ward Burton has also served as a member of the Patrick Henry Memorial Foundation Board of Directors and as an honorary co-leader of fundraising efforts for the Virginia Natural History Museum; and

WHEREAS, among many awards and accolades for his personal and professional achievements, Ward Burton received the Governor’s Environmental Excellence Award in 2008; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commend John Edward Burton III for his contributions to conservation and the protection of the Commonwealth’s natural resources; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to John Edward Burton III as an expression of the General Assembly’s admiration for his achievements as a conservationist and a philanthropist.

INTRODUCED

HJ645