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HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 872

Offered February 20, 2025

Commending David S. Widzer.

Patrons—Tran, Cohen, Helmer and Simon

WHEREAS, David S. Widzer, Senior Rabbi of Temple B'nai Shalom in Fairfax Station, celebrates the 25th anniversary of his ordination as a Reform Jewish Rabbi in 2025; and

WHEREAS, for over a quarter-century of dedicated service and leadership as a Reform Jewish Rabbi, David Widzer has guided congregants, maintained and adapted the traditions of Reform Judaism, and fostered Jewish identity among individuals and families; and

WHEREAS, David Widzer received a bachelor's degree in Judaic studies and Ethics and Political Philosophy from Brown University, a master's degree in Hebrew Letters from Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, and ordination as a Reform Jewish Rabbi from Hebrew Union College; and

WHEREAS, David Widzer served in rabbinic roles as a student at the Bahamas Jewish Congregation in Nassau, Bahamas, as an Associate Rabbi of Temple Shalom in Newton, Massachusetts, as Senior Rabbi of Temple Etz Chaim in Franklin, Massachusetts, and as Senior Rabbi of Temple Beth El of Northern Valley in Closter, New Jersey, where he presided over the merging of two congregations to form a new community, Kol Dorot; and

WHEREAS, in 2020, David Widzer joined Temple B'nai Shalom in Fairfax Station as the Senior Rabbi, serving a congregation of 345 families and more than 150 religious school students; and

WHEREAS, David Widzer led Temple B'nai Shalom in adapting Jewish practices to new modes of study and prayer during the COVID-19 pandemic; creating and affirming a new vision, mission, and statement of values rooted in the Torah and the teaching of Reform Judaism; and strengthening the partnership between Temple B'nai Shalom and its sister congregation, Abiding Presence Lutheran Church; and

WHEREAS, David Widzer counsels Temple B'nai Shalom in navigating contemporary social and cultural challenges while remaining rooted in Jewish values and keeping Jewish traditions vibrant and relevant; and

WHEREAS, David Widzer guides congregants through important Jewish life cycle events with his trademark inclusiveness, warmth, gentle humor, and empathy, including welcoming newborns into the covenant; guiding youth through consecration, B'nai Mitzvah, and confirmation; officiating weddings; and leading funeral and burial ceremonies with compassion and dignity; and

WHEREAS, David Widzer is cherished and admired by all who know him for how he generously shares his deep knowledge, love, and reverence for the Torah by leading congregants in lifelong learning, delivering inspiring sermons that provide comfort and also challenge all congregants to apply Jewish values to their daily lives, and guiding the congregation in meaningful service to the local and global community; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, That David S. Widzer hereby be commended on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of his ordination as a Reform Jewish Rabbi; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to David S. Widzer as an expression of the House of Delegates' admiration for his contributions to Reform Judaism and the Commonwealth.

INTRODUCED

HR872