

## SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 411

*Commending J. Dean Norton.*

Agreed to by the Senate, February 19, 2025  
 Agreed to by the House of Delegates, February 20, 2025

WHEREAS, J. Dean Norton, the longstanding horticulture and livestock director at George Washington's Mount Vernon in Fairfax County, the historic estate of the United States' first president, retired on December 31, 2024; and

WHEREAS, over a period of 55 years, Dean Norton dedicated himself to beautifying and maintaining the Mount Vernon gardens and grounds, beginning in 1969 when he was a sophomore in high school and continuing after he graduated from Clemson University with a degree in horticulture; and

WHEREAS, Dean Norton developed his expertise in both current plant science and management techniques and 18th century gardens and gardening practices and was promoted to the role of horticulturist in 1980; and

WHEREAS, Dean Norton's accomplishments over his tenure at Mount Vernon include the research and restoration of various gardens and green spaces, several Mount Vernon garden symposiums; and the 2014 exhibition, "Gardens and Groves: George Washington's Landscape at Mount Vernon," and its accompanying publication, *The General in the Garden*; and

WHEREAS, Dean Norton's devotion to best gardening practices was matched by his commitment to educational outreach, and he played an outsized role in promoting the restoration efforts at Mount Vernon and the mission of the Mount Vernon Ladies' Association over the years; and

WHEREAS, as a noted authority on garden history, Dean Norton lectured both across the country and abroad, conducted programs and workshops in collaboration with the Smithsonian Institution and myriad other organizations, gave hundreds of media interviews, and taught aspiring horticulturists at the George Washington University and what is today the Graduate School USA; and

WHEREAS, Dean Norton has generously offered his knowledge and experience to several historic places and organizations dedicated to gardening and preservation, including the Committee for the Preservation of the White House, the Garden Conservancy, Tudor Place, Carlyle House, Clemson University Historic Properties Committee, the American Boxwood Society, Colonial Williamsburg, and the Southern Garden History Society, which he served as president; and

WHEREAS, in recognition of his legacy of service, Dean Norton has received a great number of accolades over his career, such as the Southern Garden History Society's Flora Ann Bynum Medal, the Garden Club of America's Elizabeth Craig Weaver Proctor National Medal, the Daughters of the American Revolution's Conservation Medal, and an honorary doctorate from Washington College; and

WHEREAS, in his retirement, Dean Norton will serve at Mount Vernon as director of horticulture and livestock emeritus, ensuring that his legendary impact and influence upon the historic estate will only continue to grow; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commend J. Dean Norton, distinguished director of horticulture and livestock at George Washington's Mount Vernon, on the occasion of his retirement; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to J. Dean Norton as an expression of the General Assembly's admiration for his contributions to George Washington's Mount Vernon and the Commonwealth.

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