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SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 90

Offered February 9, 2026

Commending the Honorable Penney S. Azcarate.

Patrons—Surovell, Boysko, Carroll Foy, Ebbin, Marsden, Obenshain, Pekarsky, Perry and Salim; Delegates: Bulova, Cohen, Delaney, Helmer, Herring, Keys-Gamarra, Krizek, McGuire, Shin, Simon, Sullivan, Tran and Watts

WHEREAS, the Honorable Penney S. Azcarate, a distinguished jurist in Northern Virginia, retired as chief judge of the Fairfax County Circuit Court after more than 18 years of service on the bench; and

WHEREAS, Penney Azcarate is a graduate of Old Dominion University and veteran of the United States Marine Corps, who served the nation as a communications officer during Operation Desert Storm; and

WHEREAS, after completing her active duty military service, Penney Azcarate earned a law degree from George Mason University, then worked as a prosecutor, criminal defense attorney, and civil litigator in Fairfax County; and

WHEREAS, in 2008, Penney Azcarate was appointed as a judge of the Fairfax County General District Court of the 19th Judicial District of Virginia, where she presided with great fairness and wisdom until she was elevated to the Fairfax County Circuit Court of the 19th Judicial Circuit of Virginia in 2015; and

WHEREAS, Penney Azcarate made history as the first woman elected as chief judge of the Fairfax County Circuit Court and went on to provide many years of exceptional leadership to her fellow judges; during her tenure, she presided over several high-profile cases, oversaw initiatives to improve access to the justice system, enhanced interpreter services, developed racial equity initiatives, and launched community outreach programs; and

WHEREAS, in 2015, Penney Azcarate implemented the Veterans Treatment Docket, which assists combat veterans with mental health or substance use disorder issues and was the first such standalone docket in the Commonwealth; she also implemented the Fairfax County Drug Court for nonviolent drug offenders; and

WHEREAS, among many awards and accolades, Penney Azcarate was selected by Virginia Lawyers Weekly as a Leader in Law in 2017 and an Influential Woman in Law in 2022; she also received the President's Award from the Fairfax Bar Association in 2020 and the Distinguished Alumni Award from Old Dominion University in 2022; and

WHEREAS, Penney Azcarate served the Commonwealth and the Fairfax County community with the utmost dedication, integrity, and distinction; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commend the Honorable Penney S. Azcarate on the occasion of her retirement as chief judge of the Fairfax County Circuit Court; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the Honorable Penney S. Azcarate as an expression of the General Assembly's admiration for her legacy of service to the Commonwealth.

INTRODUCED

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