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SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 165

Offered March 4, 2026

Commending Howard E. Gwynn.

Patron—Diggs

WHEREAS, after 30 years of distinguished service, Howard E. Gwynn retired as the Commonwealth's Attorney for the City of Newport News on January 1, 2026; and

WHEREAS, Howard Gwynn was born and raised in Newport News during a time of racial segregation, which inspired him to dedicate his life to the pursuit of equal justice for all; his passion for community service was nurtured by his mother and reinforced by people like civil rights activist and former state lawmaker Flora Crittenden, who served as his guidance counselor in high school; and

WHEREAS, Howard Gwynn graduated as valedictorian of George W. Carver High School, earned a bachelor's degree in philosophy with honors from Dartmouth College, then received a law degree from the University of Michigan Law School; and

WHEREAS, Howard Gwynn began his career as an assistant prosecutor, then was elected as the Commonwealth's Attorney for Newport News in 1990; he led a team of more than 75 professionals whose goal was to ensure that the criminal justice system worked for everyone, from survivors of crime and their families to defendants trying to rebuild their lives; and

WHEREAS, under Howard Gwynn's leadership, Newport News was among the first localities in the Commonwealth to launch drug courts, trauma-informed programs for victims, and behavioral health dockets, reflecting his ideals that the justice system should promote healing, not just punishment; and

WHEREAS, Howard Gwynn has demonstrated a deep and abiding commitment to the Newport News community; he was profoundly inspired by the people who transformed themselves from victims to victors and by defendants who took full advantage of their second chance to become contributing members of society; and

WHEREAS, in recognition of his legacy of achievements, Howard Gwynn was named as the recipient of the Harry L. Carrico Professionalism Award by the Virginia State Bar Criminal Law Section in 2024; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commend Howard E. Gwynn on the occasion of his retirement as Commonwealth's Attorney for the City of Newport News; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to Howard E. Gwynn as an expression of the General Assembly's admiration for his contributions to the justice system in the Commonwealth and decades of service to the Newport News community.

INTRODUCED

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