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SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 169

Offered March 4, 2026

Commending the Richmond Free Press.

Patrons—Bagby and Jones; Delegates: Carr, Cousins and Schmidt

WHEREAS, the Richmond Free Press, a beloved and influential weekly newspaper with a mission to empower the Black community in Richmond by serving as a voice and platform for underserved perspectives, published its final edition in February 2026, concluding a distinguished 34-year print run; and

WHEREAS, after several years in the newspaper industry and as a professor at Howard University, veteran journalist Raymond H. Boone, Sr., returned to Richmond in 1991 and set out to create a newspaper that would encourage free expression about public policy and inspire readers to become more active in civic life; and

WHEREAS, serving as the paper's editor and publisher, Raymond Boone published the first edition of the Richmond Free Press on January 16, 1992, then led the paper until his death in 2014, at which point his wife, Jean Patterson Boone, took over as publisher; and

WHEREAS, in pursuit of its mission, the Richmond Free Press asked local leaders tough questions as it delved into serious matters affecting the community, including economic inequality, workplace discrimination, and criminal justice reform; and

WHEREAS, the Richmond Free Press flourished over the years and grew to have a readership of 135,000 and a circulation of more than 35,000; and

WHEREAS, throughout many pivotal moments in Richmond's recent history, the Richmond Free Press was an important voice in the public discourse, fostering awareness and understanding of various issues and injustices and advocating tirelessly for greater equality and accountability; and

WHEREAS, in recognition of its achievements in service to the community, the Richmond Free Press received numerous accolades over the years from distinguished organizations such as the Virginia Press Association, the Virginia Trial Lawyers Association, and the National Newspaper Publishers Association; and

WHEREAS, the accomplishments of the Richmond Free Press are the result of the visionary leadership of the Boones, the indefatigable efforts of the paper's journalists, photographers, and staff, and the steadfast support of its readers in Richmond and beyond; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commend the Richmond Free Press for its legacy of service and for its profound and lasting impact on the Greater Richmond community; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the Richmond Free Press as an expression of the General Assembly's admiration and gratitude for the publication's contributions to Richmond and the Commonwealth.

INTRODUCED

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