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SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 271

Offered March 9, 2026

*Celebrating the life of Donald Wise Huffman.*

Patrons—Suetterlein, Cifers, Craig, Diggs, Durant, Hackworth, Head, Jordan, McDougle, Mulchi, Obenshain, Peake, Pillion, Reeves, Stanley, Stuart and Sturtevant; Delegates: Austin, Ballard, Bloxom, Cherry, Fowler, Griffin, Leftwich, McNamara, O'Quinn, Runion, Walker, Ware, Wyatt and Zehr

WHEREAS, Donald Wise Huffman, a distinguished attorney, statewide political leader, and devoted advocate for his alma mater, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, passed away on December 5, 2025, his 98th birthday; and

WHEREAS, a native of Lexington, Donald "Don" Huffman graduated from Lexington High School in 1945 before enrolling at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (Virginia Tech) where he served as battalion commander of the Cadet Corps, a member of the German Club, a member of the Honor Court, and in Omicron Delta Kappa; and

WHEREAS, Don Huffman served the nation in the United States Army from 1946 to 1947 before returning to Virginia Tech where he graduated with the Class of 1950; and

WHEREAS, Don Huffman earned his juris doctor magna cum laude from Washington & Lee University Law School, where he was a member of Phi Beta Kappa, then began a legal career that spanned more than 40 years, including service as a United States Magistrate and Assistant United States Attorney; and

WHEREAS, Don Huffman rose to prominence in the Republican Party of Virginia by helping guide Richard D. Obenshain's election as its chair in 1972, before he himself was elected as state chair from 1982 to 1992, making him the longest-serving chair in the party's history and a significant figure in transitioning Virginia to a competitive two-party state; and

WHEREAS, a man of staunch conviction, Don Huffman founded the annual Republican Advance, an event that continues to be a cornerstone of political engagement in the Commonwealth, famously insisting that his party should never retreat, only "advance"; and

WHEREAS, during his eight-year tenure on the Virginia Tech Board of Visitors, Don Huffman earned the moniker "Mr. Hokie Stone" for championing the policy that all new campus buildings be constructed with the iconic limestone, ensuring the institution's architectural legacy for generations to come; and

WHEREAS, Don Huffman was an avid gardener, known for his vast collection of lilies, and a lifelong fan of the Boston Red Sox and Virginia Tech athletics, rarely missing a game and instilling his love for the outdoors in his children and grandchildren; and

WHEREAS, guided by his Christian faith as a longtime member of Shenandoah Baptist Church, Don Huffman was a mentor to countless young leaders, known for his wit, his integrity, and his practice of calling friends on their birthdays; and

WHEREAS, predeceased by his beloved wife of 65 years, Colleen, Don Huffman will be fondly remembered and dearly missed by his daughters, Terry and Kelly, and their husbands; his five grandchildren and two great-grandchildren; and numerous other family members, colleagues, and friends; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the General Assembly hereby note with great sadness the loss of Donald Wise Huffman, a titan of Virginia's legal and political landscape whose dedication to the Commonwealth left an indelible mark on its history; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the family of Donald Wise Huffman as an expression of the General Assembly's respect for his memory.