

2026 SESSION

ENROLLED

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 145

*Celebrating the life of Donald C. Pfanz.*

Agreed to by the House of Delegates, February 23, 2026  
Agreed to by the Senate, February 26, 2026

WHEREAS, Donald C. Pfanz of Spotsylvania County, an author, historian, and trailblazing leader in the preservation of Civil War battlefields, died on September 2, 2025; and

WHEREAS, Donald “Don” C. Pfanz was born in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, and gained an appreciation for historical preservation at a young age from his father, Harry, who was the former chief historian of the National Park Service and Gettysburg National Military Park; and

WHEREAS, Don Pfanz attended Thomas S. Wootton High School in Maryland before earning a bachelor's degree from The College of William & Mary, where he was a member of the soccer team; and

WHEREAS, after graduating from college, Don Pfanz began a 32-year career with the National Park Service, serving at Petersburg National Battlefield, Fort Sumter National Monument, and Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania County National Military Park; and

WHEREAS, while working at Petersburg National Battlefield in 1987, Don Pfanz became concerned about development around Civil War battlefields and called for the creation of an organization to preserve battlefield land through direct purchase; and

WHEREAS, Don Pfanz's advocacy led to the establishment of the Association for the Preservation of Civil War Sites, of which he was a co-founder; the organization shaped the modern battlefield preservation movement and was a precursor to the American Battlefield Trust; and

WHEREAS, Don Pfanz authored or co-authored 10 books on the Civil War, including *Clara Barton's Civil War: Between Bullet and Hospital*, *War so Terrible: A Popular History of the Battle of Fredericksburg*, and *Richard S. Ewell: A Soldier's Life*; and

WHEREAS, among many awards and accolades, Don Pfanz received the Edwin C. Bearss Lifetime Achievement Award from the American Battlefield Trust and the Ralph Happel Lifetime Achievement Award in Civil War Preservation from the Central Virginia Battlefield Trust; and

WHEREAS, predeceased by his first wife, Betty, Don Pfanz will be fondly remembered and greatly missed by his wife, Zandra, and numerous other family members, friends, and colleagues; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly hereby note with great sadness the loss of Donald C. Pfanz, an esteemed Civil War historian and battlefield preservation advocate; and, be it

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

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