

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 191

Celebrating the life of Dennis P. Gallagher.

Agreed to by the House of Delegates, March 9, 2026

WHEREAS, Dennis P. Gallagher, the longtime president and chief executive officer of the Virginia Beer Wholesalers Association and an active leader in the Richmond community, died on August 7, 2025; and

WHEREAS, born to Thomas J. Gallagher and Louise Binder Gallagher on December 1, 1946, Dennis “Denny” P. Gallagher was raised in Renovo, a small town nestled between the mountains and the Susquehanna River in Central Pennsylvania; and

WHEREAS, Denny Gallagher attended school in nearby Lock Haven, Pennsylvania, graduating from Immaculate Conception High School and receiving his bachelor's degree from Lock Haven State College, now Commonwealth University-Lock Haven, where he also worked with programs to teach fine arts to young men between 10 and 15 years old; and

WHEREAS, after graduating college, Denny Gallagher began his career as a textbook salesman for Harper & Row, then joined the Virginia Department of Corrections as a counselor in March 1971, serving in a number of roles, including prison assistant superintendent, parole officer, administrative assistant to the director, and legal investigator; and

WHEREAS, during that time, Denny Gallagher also shared his knowledge and experience by teaching penology classes to young men at St. Alban's School in Washington, D.C.; and

WHEREAS, Denny Gallagher joined the Office of the Attorney General of Virginia in July 1976 as the administrative assistant to Attorney General Andrew Miller, and later served as assistant to Attorneys General Anthony Troy and J. Marshall Coleman; and

WHEREAS, in 1979, Denny Gallagher embarked on a new career journey by joining the Home Builders Association of Virginia, where, as executive assistant, he employed his impeccable people skills to represent the interests of the Commonwealth's residential homebuilders before numerous commissions, authorities, and the General Assembly; and

WHEREAS, in recognition of his success on behalf of the Home Builders Association of Virginia, Denny Gallagher was recruited by the Virginia Beer Wholesalers Association to serve as president of the beer distributors' trade association in 1983, a position he would hold for the next 33 years until his retirement in 2016; and

WHEREAS, as president and chief executive officer of the Virginia Beer Wholesalers Association, Denny Gallagher tirelessly worked to defend the Commonwealth's reserved powers to regulate beverage alcohol granted to it under the Twenty-first Amendment to the Constitution of the United States and preserve the ability of independent family-owned businesses to provide Virginia consumers with the wide variety of alcoholic beverage products they enjoy today; and

WHEREAS, as a staunch defender of the Commonwealth's three-tier system of alcohol distribution, Denny Gallagher played an instrumental role in the ongoing development of the Beer Franchise Act into one of the most comprehensive regulatory frameworks in the nation, the codification of the Alcoholic Beverage Control Act in 1993, the passage of the Direct-to-Consumer Shipping Act of 2007, the creation of the Virginia Alcoholic Beverage Control Authority in 2015, and many other achievements to enhance and strengthen the Commonwealth's ability to control beverage alcohol within its borders; and

WHEREAS, Denny Gallagher served the Commonwealth in many other ways including as a member of the Disciplinary Board for the Third District Committee of the Virginia State Bar, the Virginia Litter and Recycling Board, and the Virginia State Selective Service Board; he always gave freely of his time and expertise to educate, guide, and mentor generations of family business owners, attorneys, and legislators about the complexities attending alcoholic beverages as a heavily regulated product; and

WHEREAS, despite the demands of his career, Denny Gallagher still found time to indulge his passion for history; he was a voracious reader and skilled wordsmith, who understood that every word and phrase had to be carefully crafted to withstand the test of time because “good enough” was never good enough; and

WHEREAS, Denny Gallagher had an innate talent for bringing people together and helping them set aside their differences to find common purpose; he was respected by his peers and legislators for his truthfulness and directness, and he was well known as a trusted friend who was compassionate, smart, sharp-witted, always ready to listen, and never forgot a birthday; and

WHEREAS, in his free time Denny Gallagher was a passionate birdwatcher, a patron of the opera, and an advocate for the James River; he also enjoyed spending many summers at his cottage in Maine; and

WHEREAS, Denny Gallagher will be fondly remembered and dearly missed by his wife, Audrey Gross; his brother, Thomas Gallagher, Jr.; his colleagues at the Virginia Beer Wholesalers Association and Virginia

Wine Wholesalers Association; and numerous other family members and friends; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the House of Delegates hereby note with great sadness the loss of Dennis P. Gallagher, whose dedication, integrity, and selflessness were an inspiration to all who knew him; 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 Dennis P. Gallagher as an expression of the House of Delegates' respect for his memory.