

2026 SESSION

ENROLLED

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 266

Celebrating the life of James Ernest Cornett.

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

WHEREAS, James Ernest Cornett, a respected leader in banking and real estate and a trusted small business owner in Big Stone Gap, died on February 9, 2026; and

WHEREAS, born in Bristol, James “Jim” Ernest Cornett attended Bluff City High School in Tennessee, then continued his education at East Tennessee State University, the Virginia Bankers School of Bank Management at the University of Virginia, and the Stonier Graduate School of Banking at Rutgers University; and

WHEREAS, Jim Cornett served his country as a member of the United States Army, then returned to Bristol for a few years before settling in Big Stone Gap in 1973; and

WHEREAS, over the course of his career, Jim Cornett spent 30 years in the banking industry, working for First National Exchange Bank, later Dominion Bank, throughout the region; he also spent 20 years in real estate as the former owner of Mountain Empire Realty and more recently as a member of Lonesome Pine Realty; and

WHEREAS, in addition to his work in banking and real estate, Jim Cornett was a respected antiques dealer in Southwest Virginia and East Tennessee as the owner of Trail Antiques for 40 years; he and his wife were also the co-owners of Sue's Hallmark Shop in downtown Big Stone Gap for 25 years; and

WHEREAS, Jim Cornett supported a wide range of charitable programs and offered his insightful leadership to the Wise County Chamber of Commerce, Wise County Industrial Development Authority, Mountain Empire Community College Foundation, and other organizations; and

WHEREAS, an avid golfer, Jim Cornett joined the Lonesome Pine Country Club shortly after moving to Big Stone Gap and was a member of the club for more than 50 years; and

WHEREAS, predeceased by his wife of 61 years, Susan, Jim Cornett will be fondly remembered and greatly missed by his daughter, Debbie, and her family 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 James Ernest Cornett, a highly admired real estate professional, banker, and entrepreneur in Big Stone Gap; 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 James Ernest Cornett as an expression of the House of Delegates' respect for his memory.

ENROLLED

HR266ER