

2026 SPECIAL SESSION I

ENROLLED

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 2017

Celebrating the life of Franklin Emmett Lewis.

Agreed to by the Senate, June 22, 2026

WHEREAS, Franklin Emmett Lewis, an educator, coach, journalist, and public servant, and an incomparable champion for the Saltville community who guided the town for more than two and a half decades as mayor, died on April 1, 2026; and

WHEREAS, Franklin “T-Bone” Lewis was born in Wise to the late Thomas and Florence Lewis; he graduated from Hiwassee College in Tennessee, where he served as class president and as a member of the Phi Theta Kappa honor society, then returned to the Commonwealth and earned a bachelor's degree from Emory & Henry University and a master's degree from the University of Virginia; and

WHEREAS, T-Bone Lewis was a star basketball player in his youth and was inducted into the Smyth County Sports Hall of Fame, Hiwassee College Athletic Hall of Fame, and Emory & Henry Sports Hall of Fame; and

WHEREAS, T-Bone Lewis began his career as a teacher and coach at R.B. Worthy High School, now known as Northwood High School, in Saltville; he also became a guidance counselor at the school and ultimately mentored and inspired generations of young people over the course of more than 30 years; and

WHEREAS, in addition to his work in education, T-Bone Lewis held positions with Field Enterprise Corporation, S&L Coal Sales, Highlands Union Bank, and the Virginia High School League; he was also a respected journalist who established the *Saltville Progress* newspaper and wrote as a columnist for various other outlets; and

WHEREAS, desirous to be of further service to the Saltville community, T-Bone Lewis ran for and was elected to the Saltville Town Council and served one term as a member before he was elected as mayor, a position he held for 26 years; and

WHEREAS, T-Bone Lewis represented the interests of Saltville residents on numerous local and regional committees and significantly enhanced the quality of life for community members through his vision, persistence, and ability to build consensus and achieve results; and

WHEREAS, among his many achievements, T-Bone Lewis pursued a grant to design and implement the Smyth County Litter Attack Program, which helped keep the county clean and provided summer jobs for local youths, and an anti-smoking campaign, which educated countless students about the dangers of smoking; and

WHEREAS, T-Bone Lewis will be fondly remembered and greatly missed by his wife, Carolyn; his daughter, Laura, and her family; and numerous other family members and friends; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the Senate of Virginia hereby note with great sadness the loss of Franklin Emmett Lewis, a pillar of the Saltville community who served local residents in myriad ways over the course of his distinguished career; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the family of Franklin Emmett Lewis as an expression of the Senate of Virginia's respect for his memory.

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