

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 2074

Commending Colonel James T. O'Kelley, USMCR (Ret.).

Agreed to by the House of Delegates, June 22, 2026

WHEREAS, Colonel James T. O'Kelley, USMCR (Ret.) is an honorable veteran and esteemed law-enforcement officer who greatly served both the nation and the Commonwealth in his military and civilian careers; and

WHEREAS, a native of Asheville, James “Jim” T. O'Kelley earned a bachelor's degree in civil engineering from Duke University in 1964 and later obtained a master's degree in systems management and a doctorate in public policy analysis from The George Washington University in 1971 and 1976, respectively; and

WHEREAS, Jim O'Kelley honorably served his country for 36 years as a member of the United States Marine Corps (USMC) Reserve, including tours of duty in Vietnam as a second lieutenant platoon commander, an advisor to the 2nd Republic of Korea Marine Corps Brigade, and a lieutenant executive officer and captain, company commander, with the USMC 9th Engineer Battalion; and

WHEREAS, Jim O'Kelley pursued further military education throughout his career at a number of prestigious institutions in the United States, Canada, and England, including what was formerly the Amphibious Warfare School at Quantico and the Naval War College, and he later also served as a member of the faculty at many of these institutions, as well as an adjunct professor of business and public administration at George Mason University from 1976 to 1996; and

WHEREAS, Jim O'Kelley received numerous decorations for his service and valor as a member of the USMCR, including the Legion of Merit, the Bronze Star Medal with “V” device, the Purple Heart, the Air Medal, and the Combat Action Ribbon; and

WHEREAS, after retiring from military service as the director of the Marine Corps Logistics Readiness Center at Headquarters Marine Corps in Washington, D.C., Jim O'Kelley worked with the United States Geological Survey, where he retired in 2006, capping four decades of service to the United States Government; and

WHEREAS, Jim O'Kelley safeguarded and protected his community for more than 11 years as a part-time deputy sheriff with the Albemarle County Sheriff's Office and as president of the Charlottesville-Albemarle TRIAD; he has also been a reserve deputy sheriff in Greene County since 2019; and

WHEREAS, Jim O'Kelley is a 32nd Degree Scottish Rite Mason who has served as president of the Thomas Jefferson Chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution and has traced his family ancestry to its 1740 entry into Richmond and to three seventh generational grandfathers who participated in the Revolutionary War as Patriots at the Battles of Guilford Courthouse and Kings Mountain; he has also served as the Commandant of the Bradley T. Arms Marine Corps League Detachment; and

WHEREAS, Jim O'Kelley is an accomplished war historian who co-authored the book *The 9th Engineer Battalion, First Marine Division in Vietnam*, which recounts his experiences with the unit during the Vietnam War; and

WHEREAS, for nearly 15 years, Jim O'Kelley has devoted himself to researching and sharing the stories of veterans from the Charlottesville and Albemarle County area who died while serving in Vietnam; and

WHEREAS, as chairman of the History and Education Committee of the Dogwood Vietnam Memorial Foundation in Charlottesville, Jim O'Kelley and his wife have given generously of their time to memorialize the bravery and sacrifice of Charlottesville and Albemarle County's young heroes; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, That Colonel James T. O'Kelley, USMCR (Ret.), hereby be commended for his legacy of dedication and service; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to Colonel James T. O'Kelley, USMCR (Ret.), as an expression of the House of Delegates' admiration for his contributions to Charlottesville, Albemarle County, the Commonwealth, and the nation.