

2026 SPECIAL SESSION I

ENROLLED

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 2181

Commending Edith Smith.

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

WHEREAS, Edith Smith, a devoted advocate for military members, veterans, surviving spouses, and their families, has dedicated over three decades to advancing policies that strengthen and support military families across the nation; and

WHEREAS, a proud member of Mary Washington College's Class of 1962, Edith “Edie” Smith was inspired to become an advocate for military families and began volunteering with the National Military Family Association in 1990 after her husband, retired Lieutenant Colonel Vincent M. Smith of the United States Marine Corps, lost his military health care benefits as a result of his service-connected disability; and

WHEREAS, Edie Smith emerged as a respected voice on military family issues, taking her advocacy to Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C., and testifying before the Subcommittee on Personnel of the United States Senate Committee on Armed Services in March 1998, where she shared firsthand experiences and championed reforms to better support military retirees, disabled veterans, and their families; and

WHEREAS, following her husband's death in 1998, Edie Smith expanded her advocacy efforts to focus on surviving spouses and families, dedicating herself to ensuring the family members of those who had sacrificed in service to the nation received fair treatment and the benefits they had earned; and

WHEREAS, through years of determined leadership and advocacy, Edie Smith contributed to landmark policy changes, including the elimination of the Social Security offset to the Survivor Benefit Plan and the repeal of the so-called Widow's Tax, helping secure greater financial stability and fairness for surviving military families; and

WHEREAS, beyond her work to advance public policy, Edie Smith has provided invaluable guidance and support to countless surviving spouses over the years, helping them understand and access the benefits available to them and navigate the challenges associated with the loss of a loved one; and

WHEREAS, firmly believing that every citizen can make a difference, Edie Smith has trained and mentored hundreds of military family members to become effective advocates, empowering them to engage with elected officials and speak on behalf of their communities and fellow military families; and

WHEREAS, Edie Smith played a key role in organizing support for a constitutional amendment to expand the Commonwealth's property tax exemption for the surviving spouses of service members who die in the line of duty, working alongside other surviving spouses, veterans' organizations, and elected officials to secure its passage by the General Assembly of Virginia and subsequent approval by Virginia voters in 2024; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, That Edith Smith hereby be commended for her extraordinary advocacy on behalf of military families, veterans, and surviving spouses and for her longstanding service to the nation; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to Edith Smith as an expression of the House of Delegates' admiration for her longstanding and meaningful contributions to our nation's military families and dedicated service to the nation.

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