

# 2024 SPECIAL SESSION I

INTRODUCED

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## HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 653

Offered May 13, 2024

Prefiled May 13, 2024

4 *Commending Patsy Pettus.*

5 Patron—Carr

6 WHEREAS, Patsy Pettus, a distinguished member of the Richmond community who has cemented  
7 her legacy as a philanthropist and historical preservationist through her support of a number of  
8 high-profile restoration projects in the city in recent years, celebrated her 95th birthday in 2024; and

9 WHEREAS, after living in Arkansas and Missouri up to the age of 12, Patsy Pettus and her family  
10 moved to the Commonwealth in 1941 and shortly thereafter settled in the Forest Hill neighborhood of  
11 Richmond; and

12 WHEREAS, Patsy Pettus went on to marry her fellow John Marshall High School classmate, Hunter  
13 Pettus, Jr., in 1951 and to devote many years to raising the couple's four boys; and

14 WHEREAS, in her later years, Patsy Pettus developed an interest in architecture that she cultivated  
15 by enrolling in an art program at Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) and by traveling to many  
16 of the world's great cities; and

17 WHEREAS, the origins of Patsy Pettus' campaign to preserve the architectural wonders of Richmond  
18 and to elevate some of its most ambitious building initiatives may be traced to a \$1 million gift she  
19 presented to VCU when the university was building its Institute of Contemporary Art (ICA) in 2016;  
20 and

21 WHEREAS, after ICA used her funding to construct its signature stairway, named the Patsy K. and  
22 Hunter R. Pettus, Jr. Staircase in her honor, Patsy Pettus focused her efforts on saving historically  
23 noteworthy staircases throughout Richmond, earning her the affectionate sobriquet "Staircase Lady"; and

24 WHEREAS, through her generous financial support, Patsy Pettus has since left her mark on the  
25 staircases of some of Richmond's most notable landmarks, including The Valentine, Monumental  
26 Church, the Masons' Hall, and the Virginia Museum of History & Culture, as well as the Battersea  
27 plantation villa in Petersburg; and

28 WHEREAS, Patsy Pettus has already dedicated \$1 million toward the renovation and expansion of  
29 the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts in Richmond, including the construction of a new staircase to be  
30 named in her honor, showing no signs of diminishing in her noble project to support worthy  
31 architectural endeavors in the Commonwealth's capital for the benefit of future generations; now,  
32 therefore, be it

33 WHEREAS, RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, That Patsy Pettus hereby be commended for her  
34 extraordinary contributions to the architectural treasures of Richmond on the occasion of her 95th  
35 birthday; and, be it

36 WHEREAS, RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution  
37 for presentation to Patsy Pettus as an expression of the House of Delegates' admiration for her  
38 generosity and appreciation for her many good deeds in service to Richmond and the Commonwealth.

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