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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 902

Offered February 14, 2003

Commending Chief Justice Leroy Rountree Hassell, Sr.

Patrons—Alexander, Abbitt, Albo, Almand, Amundson, Armstrong, Athey, Barlow, Baskerville, Bell, Black, Bland, Bloxom, Bolvin, Brink, Broman, Bryant, Byron, Callahan, Carrico, Christian, Cline, Cole, Cosgrove, Council, Cox, Crittenden, Darner, Devolites, Dillard, Drake, Dudley, Gear, Griffith, Hall, Hamilton, Hargrove, Hogan, Howell, Hugo, Hull, Hurt, Ingram, Janis, Joannou, Johnson, Jones, D.C., Jones, S.C., Keister, Kilgore, Landes, Lingamfelter, Louderback, Marrs, Marshall, D.W., Marshall, R.G., May, McDonnell, McDougale, McQuigg, Melvin, Miles, Moran, Morgan, Nixon, Nutter, O'Bannon, Oder, Orrock, Parrish, Petersen, Phillips, Plum, Pollard, Purkey, Putney, Rapp, Reese, Reid, Rollison, Rust, Saxman, Scott, Sears, Sherwood, Shuler, Spruill, Stump, Suit, Tata, Thomas, Van Landingham, Van Yahres, Wardrup, Ware, Watts, Weatherholtz, Welch, Woodrum and Wright; Senators: Blevins, Bolling, Byrne, Chichester, Colgan, Cuccinelli, Deeds, Edwards, Hanger, Hawkins, Houck, Howell, Lambert, Lucas, Marsh, Martin, Maxwell, Miller, K.G., Miller, Y.B., Mims, Newman, Norment, O'Brien, Potts, Puckett, Puller, Quayle, Rerras, Reynolds, Ruff, Saslaw, Stolle, Stosch, Ticer, Trumbo, Wagner, Wampler, Watkins, Whipple and Williams

WHEREAS, Leroy Rountree Hassell, Sr., a justice on the Supreme Court of Virginia since 1989, was sworn in as the 24th Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Virginia on February 11, 2003; and

WHEREAS, a native of Norfolk, Leroy Rountree Hassell graduated from Norview High School, where he was a champion debater, in 1973; and

WHEREAS, Leroy Rountree Hassell graduated from the University of Virginia, where he was on the Dean's List every semester and earned numerous honors and awards, and Harvard Law School, where he was on the Civil Rights—Civil Liberties Law Review; and

WHEREAS, following his graduation from Harvard Law in 1980, Leroy Rountree Hassell joined the Richmond law firm of McGuireWoods and became the youngest chairman of the Richmond School Board; and

WHEREAS, in 1989, at the age of 34, Leroy Rountree Hassell was appointed to the Supreme Court of Virginia by Governor Gerald Baliles and was elected by the General Assembly; and

WHEREAS, Justice Hassell is a member of numerous professional, civic, and community service organizations and has held leadership positions in most of them; and

WHEREAS, Justice Hassell has been honored repeatedly by, among numerous others, the University of Richmond, the American Bar Association, the City of Portsmouth, and the Richmond Jaycees; and

WHEREAS, Justice Hassell was selected by his fellow Supreme Court justices to be Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Virginia, the first time the position has not been awarded automatically to the most senior justice and the first time it has been awarded to an African-American in the 224-year history of the Court; and

WHEREAS, Justice Hassell has pledged to administer a judicial system in which "all Virginians are treated fairly with dignity, equality, and respect"; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commend Justice Leroy Rountree Hassell, Sr., on his selection as Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Virginia; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to Chief Justice Leroy Rountree Hassell, Sr., as an expression of the General Assembly's admiration, appreciation, and best wishes.

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