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SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 497

Offered February 17, 2003

Commending James A. Wilding.

Patrons—Colgan, Bolling, Byrne, Chichester, Cuccinelli, Deeds, Edwards, Hanger, Hawkins, Houck, Howell, Lambert, Lucas, Marsh, Martin, Miller, K.G., Miller, Y.B., Mims, Norment, O'Brien, Puckett, Puller, Quayle, Rerras, Reynolds, Ruff, Saslaw, Stolle, Stosch, Ticer, Trumbo, Wagner, Wampler, Watkins, Whipple and Williams; Delegates: Lingamfelter, McQuigg and Parrish

WHEREAS, James A. Wilding, the president and chief executive of the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority for 16 years, will retire in April 2003; and

WHEREAS, James Wilding has headed the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority, which controls Reagan National and Dulles International Airports, since the federal government relinquished control of the airports to the regional organization in 1987; and

WHEREAS, one of the more highly respected airport leaders in the country, James Wilding has led the authority during a time of growth, expansion, and turmoil for Reagan National and Dulles Airports; and

WHEREAS, during James Wilding's tenure, the terminal at Reagan National Airport was rebuilt, a \$2.6 billion building program is underway at Dulles International Airport, and strict new security procedures have been instituted at both airports in the wake of the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks; and

WHEREAS, well-regarded throughout the industry for his knowledge, intellect, competence, and political skills, James Wilding successfully weighs the often-competing interests of the federal government, the airlines, politically appointed board members, and residents who live near the airports; and

WHEREAS, it is testimony to James Wilding's skills that he is highly respected by all of these groups and is admired for his ability to explain the often complex and arcane issues facing the Authority to legislators and citizens; and

WHEREAS, under the leadership of James Wilding, both airports have become crucial parts of the economy of Northern Virginia, and he played a key role in persuading President George W. Bush to reopen Reagan National Airport three weeks after the September 11 terrorist attacks, thereby lessening the economic impact of its closing; and

WHEREAS, James Wilding's 16 years of service to the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority have been marked by uncommon dedication, accomplishment, and success; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commend James A. Wilding on the completion of an exemplary career of service to the Washington Metropolitan Airports Authority; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to James A. Wilding as an expression of the General Assembly's admiration and gratitude for his exceptional leadership.

ENGROSSED

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