

2006 SESSION

ENROLLED

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 238

Celebrating the life of William Thomas Rice.

Agreed to by the Senate, March 2, 2006
Agreed to by the House of Delegates, March 9, 2006

WHEREAS, William Thomas Rice, a railroad executive whose work helped create two of the East Coast's largest railroads, died on February 5, 2006; and

WHEREAS, born in Hague, William T. Rice served in the Cadet-Corps and graduated from Virginia Tech on a scholarship from Jessie Ball DuPont, who funded scholarships for students from the Northern Neck area; and

WHEREAS, since he was allowed only half the money he needed for school from the scholarship, and having no money coming from his family during the Depression, William T. Rice had to work three jobs at times, and he still managed to graduate with the highest grade point average in his civil engineering class in 1934; and

WHEREAS, after graduation, William T. Rice accepted a job offer with the Pennsylvania Railroad at \$155 per month so he could get married; and

WHEREAS, called to active duty in 1942, William T. Rice served his country in the United States Army during World War II and was assigned to help operate the Trans-Iranian Railway between the Persian Gulf and Tehran; and

WHEREAS, by the end of the war, William T. Rice was in charge of railroad operations in the half of Japan that was occupied by the 6th Army; he was eventually inducted into the United States Army Transportation Corps Hall of Fame for his notable service, and he retired in 1969 as a major general in the Army Reserve; and

WHEREAS, during his long and exceptional career with the railroad, William T. Rice worked his way up from a modest, mid-level track supervisor for the Pennsylvania Railroad, "where he learned railroads from the railbeds up," to become the president of the Richmond, Fredericksburg & Potomac Railroad and the Seaboard Coast Line Railroad; and

WHEREAS, William T. Rice brokered the merger of the Atlantic Coast Line with the Seaboard Air Line railroads, creating the Seaboard Coast Line Railroad Company in 1967; and

WHEREAS, William T. Rice was also invaluable in negotiating the merger of the Chessie System and the Seaboard Coast Line that resulted in the CSX Corporation in 1980, creating the largest railroad in the Eastern United States; he was named chairman emeritus for his many contributions to the new railroad system; and

WHEREAS, while president of Seaboard Coast Line, William T. Rice served as chairman of the Louisville and Nashville Railroad Company, was elected chairman of Seaboard and its parent Seaboard Coast Line Industries Inc. in 1970, and chairman of The Family Lines for a few years; and

WHEREAS, concerned with civic affairs and the well-being of his neighbors, William T. Rice was a five-term senior warden at St. Stephen's Episcopal Church in Richmond and was a founder and first president of the Westminster-Canterbury Foundation; and

WHEREAS, William T. Rice was honored with numerous civic awards, including the National Defense Institute of America's Defense Transportation Man of the Year in 1972 and the National Association of Shippers Agents' Railroad Man of the Year in 1975; and

WHEREAS, William T. Rice will be remembered as one of the great railroad executives and industry leaders of the postwar period and will be sorely missed by his family, his many friends, and colleagues; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the General Assembly hereby note with great sadness the loss of an outstanding Virginian, William Thomas Rice; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the family of William T. Rice as an expression of the General Assembly's great respect for his memory.

ENROLLED

SJ238ER