

Senator Houck Reports From Richmond Week of April 10, 2006

While the focus of the 2006 session was devoted to budgets and transportation, I worked with several of my colleagues in both the Senate and the House of Delegates on issues of importance to our local community. Specifically, Delegate Ed Scott (R-Madison) and I have worked for almost a year to solve our constituents' concerns over the quality and pricing of water in community wells.

Senate Joint Resolution 82, my joint effort with Delegate Scott, has been passed by the General Assembly. SJ 82 directs the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission (JLARC) to study small community water systems in Virginia. The Commission will determine whether the needs of Virginia citizens are being met through existing regulations regarding water quality and rates charged and will make recommendations on any needed improvements.

JLARC is comprised of Senators and Delegates with authority granted by the *Code of Virginia*. The Commission meets throughout the year to study the operations, practices and duties of state agencies, as they relate to efficiency in the utilization of space, personnel, equipment and facilities. Additionally, they make performance reviews of state agencies and its operations. After its review, the Commission reports its findings back to the General Assembly.

Before JLARC begins its review, the General Assembly, and specifically the Senate and House Rules Committees, must approve all studies. As a member of this prestigious Committee, I am given the opportunity to review and provide input on the many proposed studies. Over the last two General Assembly Sessions, thirty four JLARC resolutions were introduced with only fourteen resolutions passed. The fact that SJ 82 passed serves as a testament to the hard work that Delegate Scott and I put into this issue.

I will also use this opportunity to recognize individuals from the 17th District the General Assembly honored.

- Commending Melissa Chambers, of Orange, who was one of three national finalists for the County Woman of the Year contest sponsored by *Country Woman* Magazine.
- Commending Joyce Lindsay, a cosmetology instructor at Madison County High School, who was the 2005 recipient of the National Outstanding New Teacher of the Year award presented by the Association for Career and Technical Education, Trade and Industrial Education Division.
- Commending Wallace "Monk" Sanford, III, of Orange County, who was named the Virginia regional finalist for the Southeastern Farmer of the Year award.
- Celebrating the life of Harry Macon Lumsden, former Treasurer of Louisa County, who passed away on December 15, 2005.
- Celebrating the life of Giles Henry Miller, Jr., "Mr. Culpeper", who passed away on October 4, 2005, at the age of 102.

As always, if you have any questions or comments, please do not hesitate to contact my office either via email at ehouck@adelphia.net or via telephone at (540) 786-2782.