



SPONSOR: Rep. Michael Smith on behalf of all Representatives

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
151st GENERAL ASSEMBLY

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 12

HONORING THE MEMORY AND CELEBRATING THE LIFE OF THE HONORABLE PIERRE S. DU PONT IV,  
FORMER DELAWARE STATE REPRESENTATIVE, MEMBER OF CONGRESS, AND GOVERNOR OF  
DELAWARE.

1 WHEREAS, the Honorable Pierre S. du Pont IV departed this life at the age of 86 years on the Eighth Day of May  
2 2021; and

3 WHEREAS, Governor du Pont was born in Wilmington on 22<sup>nd</sup> day of January 1935, the oldest of three children  
4 of Pierre S. du Pont III and Jane Holcomb du Pont; and

5 WHEREAS, Governor du Pont was the great-great-great grandson of a refugee that came to America fleeing from  
6 revolutionary France in 1800; and

7 WHEREAS, by graduating from Philips Exeter Academy in 1952 and earning a mechanical engineering degree  
8 from Princeton University in 1956, Governor du Pont was educated in preparation to follow in the family business of the  
9 Dupont chemical empire; and

10 WHEREAS, while a student at Princeton, Governor du Pont met Elise Ravenal Wood of Philadelphia, whom he  
11 would later marry in 1957; and

12 WHEREAS, Governor du Pont and his wife were blessed with four children, their daughter Elise, and sons Pierre  
13 V, Benjamin, and Éleuthère, and 10 grandchildren; and

14 WHEREAS, from 1957 to 1960, Governor du Pont served in the Naval Reserve as a lieutenant where he found a  
15 desire to practice law after prosecuting and defending minor cases under the military justice system; and

16 WHEREAS, Governor du Pont then attended Harvard Law School from 1960 to 1963, winning the Ames Moot  
17 Court Competition in his final year; and

18 WHEREAS, in 1963, Governor du Pont then returned to work at the family enterprise, originally in marketing,  
19 then as a quality-control officer; and

20 WHEREAS, in 1968, Governor du Pont won a seat in the Delaware House of Representatives, becoming the only  
21 lawyer to be serving in the body at the time; and

22 WHEREAS, two years later, Governor du Pont left the General Assembly and his job in the family business to run  
23 for the United States House of Representatives in representation of the state of Delaware, successfully winning the seat and  
24 being re-elected to two more terms; and

25 WHEREAS, in 1976, at the urging of Delaware's Republican Party leadership, Governor du Pont returned to  
26 Delaware to run for Governor as an experienced politician in a time that the state of Delaware was deep in debt with a  
27 shrinking tax base and an unemployment level that was among the highest in the country; and

28 WHEREAS, in 1977, Governor du Pont won the governorship race with 57% of the vote and would later, in 1980,  
29 become the first Delaware governor to win re-election in the previous 20 years in an election that saw both Governor du  
30 Pont earn an astounding 71% of the vote, the greatest margin against a major party opponent in Delaware history, as well as  
31 the Republicans achieve a majority in the state House of Representatives ; and

32 WHEREAS, Governor du Pont enacted legislation that established a state budgetary spending limit of 98 percent  
33 of state revenues, created a state "rainy day fund", and established Delaware as a paradise for the banking industry due to  
34 the 1981 Financial Center Development Act which eliminated usury restrictions on in-state banks which allowed  
35 assessments of high-interest rates for credit customers independent of where they resided; and

36 WHEREAS, this law brought 30 banks to the state of Delaware and created 43,000 financial service jobs; and

37 WHEREAS, upon his leaving office in 1985, Governor du Pont's approval ratings had approached 90%, the state's  
38 economy had rebounded with unemployment decreased by 6% and the top tax rate had been decreased by 50%; and

39 WHEREAS, in 1986, Governor du Pont announced his candidacy for the 1988 presidential election, unfortunately  
40 dropping out of the race after two primary votes; and

41 WHEREAS, from 1994 to 1997, Governor du Pont served as the chairman of the National Review Institute in  
42 New York, as well as serving as a director of the law firm Richards, Layton & Finger in Wilmington; and

43 WHEREAS, after retiring in 2007, Governor du Pont authored "Outside the Box", a monthly column for the Wall  
44 Street Journal until 2014; and

45 WHEREAS, Governor du Pont also established the Pete du Pont Freedom Foundation, which annually honors a  
46 person who has helped create economic growth in the private sector with its "Pete du Pont Individual Freedom Award";  
47 and

48 WHEREAS, through his lifetime of distinguished achievement Governor du Pont has earned a well- deserved  
49 place in the history of the First State for his many positive contributions to the betterment of Delaware and its citizens.

50 NOW, THEREFORE:

51 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of the 151st General Assembly of the State of Delaware, that the entire  
52 membership does hereby honor the memory and celebrate the life of the Honorable Pierre S. du Pont IV, Governor of  
53 Delaware from 1977 until 1985.

54 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the House extends heartfelt condolences to former First Lady Elise du Pont  
55 and other family members and loved ones of the Governor.

56 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that suitable copies of this House Resolution be given to Governor du Pont's  
57 family upon its passage.

#### SYNOPSIS

This House Resolution honors the memory and celebrates the life of the Honorable Pierre S. "Pete" du Pont IV, Governor of Delaware from 1977 to 1985, who departed this life on the eighth day of May 2021.