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SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 503

Offered February 14, 2001

Commending Arlington County.

Patrons—Whipple, Howell and Ticer; Delegates: Almand, Brink and Darner

WHEREAS, Arlington County will celebrate the bicentennial of its establishment during the year 2001; and

WHEREAS, Arlington's history dates back 10,000 years to the communities of indigenous populations, was a major area of exploration during the 16th century, including visits by Captain John Smith, and has been associated with major events in Virginia for more than 400 years; and

WHEREAS, what is now Arlington County was made part of Northumberland County in 1648, the first land grant in the area of the County took place in 1654, and the first settlement in the County occurred in the 1690s; and

WHEREAS, the land that is now Arlington County was part of the original District of Columbia, established by the United States Congress in 1801 and called "Alexandria County of the District of Columbia" for 45 years before it was returned to Virginia as the result of a plebiscite in 1846; and

WHEREAS, Arlington County was an agrarian society, and its people through much of its history up to the 20th century were largely of Anglo-Saxon descent; and

WHEREAS, the Civil War brought profound change to Arlington, as the federal government built a network of fortifications and other construction related to the war effort; and

WHEREAS, the Civil War also had a significant impact on the evolution of African-American settlement in the County through the establishment of Freedman's Villages, whose inhabitants represented the first major migration of refugees into the County; and

WHEREAS, during that time, the federal government acquired "Arlington," the home of Robert E. Lee, to punish the Confederate commander for choosing Virginia over the Union during the Civil War; and

WHEREAS, this property became the premier resting place for America's heroes, an internationally renowned icon of American heritage and values, and the site for which Arlington County is best known and from which the county takes its symbol; and

WHEREAS, Arlington County continued to be an important venue for national defense, becoming the site of the first military aircraft flights, the home of the Pentagon, the location for top-secret intelligence operations during World War II, and the headquarters of the National Guard; and

WHEREAS, during the early 20th century, Arlington began to develop two of its most enduring institutions—its residential neighborhoods and its commitment to mass transit, the latter in the form of the Washington and Old Dominion Railroad; and

WHEREAS, Arlington gained its current name in 1920 and modernized its government in 1930, establishing the first county manager form of government in the United States, including a county board of five members elected at large; and

WHEREAS, the County became the pioneer of the garden apartment form of housing, a direct response to the County's growing number of federal workers drawn to the area by the New Deal and World War II; and

WHEREAS, Arlington has maintained a long, proud history of commitment to education, establishing the "Better Schools Movement" in the 1940s, which marks the beginning of the modern school system in the County; and

WHEREAS, Arlington County formally opposed the policy of Massive Resistance in the 1950s, underscoring its belief in the value of community diversity; and

WHEREAS, Arlington County has welcomed newcomers from around the world, offering the community an extraordinary opportunity to experience and benefit from a multiplicity of foods, cultures, music, and philosophies, strengthening the fabric of community life, and promoting an environment of tolerance and good will; and

WHEREAS, building upon the past, Arlington has become a modern metropolis of economic power, resting upon its nationally praised urban planning and transit-oriented development, featuring the Metro system; its fiscal responsibility; and its commitment to a wholesome natural and social environment; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the General Assembly hereby formally express its recognition of Arlington County for the year 2001 in honor of its bicentennial celebration and 200 years of progress; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare a copy of this resolution for

ENGROSSED

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59 presentation to the Arlington County Bicentennial Task Force as an expression of the General
60 Assembly's congratulations and best wishes for a glorious bicentennial celebration.