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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 383

Offered February 24, 2006

Honoring The Right Honorable Winston Spencer Churchill on the occasion of the 60th anniversary of his address to the General Assembly on March 8, 1946, by proclaiming him an honorary citizen of the Commonwealth of Virginia, posthumously.

Patrons—Callahan, Cox, Griffith, Howell, W.J., Landes and Putney

Unanimous consent to introduce

WHEREAS, sixty years ago, on March 8, 1946, Winston Churchill stood on the rostrum of the chamber of the House of Delegates and professed to the citizens of America and Great Britain, "In these last years of my life, there is a message of which I conceive myself to be a bearer; it is that we should stand together"; and

WHEREAS, the 600 Virginians and Britons in the hall listened intently—Senators and Delegates, their wives, members of the Supreme Court, state officials, British dignitaries, their guests, and employees of the legislature—as Mr. Churchill spoke eloquently from the podium with General Dwight D. Eisenhower seated to his right, Field Marshal Sir Henry Maitland Wilson to his left, and Governor William M. Tuck, Speaker Thomas B. Stanley, and Lieutenant Governor L. Preston Collins seated behind on the dais; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Churchill's apparent and impassioned theme, during his visit to the General Assembly in Richmond and as he toured the United States, was the imperative of a steadfast Anglo-American alliance, strong in its combined resources and not to be ignored by aggressors; and

WHEREAS, on the day following Mr. Churchill's visit, *The Richmond News Leader* reported the events leading up to the famous statesman's address, capturing the charm of the entourage arriving before dawn by a five-car train at Broad Street Station with Mr. Churchill sleeping aboard a private pullman; he awakened at 8:30 a.m. to breakfast alone, refused to meet with reporters, and readied to greet state representatives sent to welcome him at 10:00 a.m.; and

WHEREAS, the daily newspaper depicted the elation and pride of 30,000 Richmonders, cheering and waving in the drizzling rain, as the cavalcade slowly made its way down Monument Avenue, and Franklin and Grace Streets to the Capitol grounds, which greeted him with the first buds of spring; and

WHEREAS, the *Richmond Times Dispatch* reported the details of Mr. Churchill's 20-minute speech for all Virginians as a "dissertation on Anglo-American concepts of individual liberty, embellished by allusions to great Virginians of the past—to pay tribute to General's Eisenhower and Marshall; to remark on the 'prodigious strength of the United States,' and to give play to the Churchill flair for spontaneous phrasemaking"; and

WHEREAS, America's strong and enduring bond with England today, evident in our alliances in recent conflicts in the Middle East and in the War Against Terrorism, were forged in World War I, strengthened in World War II, and are reminiscent in Churchill's words that day, "We stand together in malice to none, in greed for nothing, but in defense of those causes which we hold dear not only for our own benefit, but because we believe they mean the honor and the happiness of long generations of men"; and

WHEREAS, after Mr. Churchill completed his address, and the applause finally waned, the Assembly began an enthusiastic call for General Eisenhower to speak; and

WHEREAS, after a time, and with Churchill's insistence, General Eisenhower approached the rostrum to thundering applause; he reminded those in the chamber, "It is one of the high honors of my life to return to a joint meeting of the Legislature in the State in which my mother was born and reared. I could not conceive of a happier occasion upon which to come than as one of the aides of one of the great men of this world"; and

WHEREAS, those inspirational words of Churchill, as well as General Eisenhower, will remain forever a cherished event in the record of the General Assembly of Virginia and in the history of the Commonwealth; and

WHEREAS, on that memorable day in 1946, the General Assembly presented Mr. Churchill with Senate Joint Resolution No. 49-A "as a mark of the admiration and esteem of America's oldest legislative assembly for England's great Prime Minister"; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly honor The Right Honorable Winston Spencer Churchill on the occasion of the 60th anniversary of his address to the General Assembly on March 8, 1946, by proclaiming him an honorary citizen of the Commonwealth of Virginia, posthumously; and, be it

INTRODUCED

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59 RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution
60 for presentation to Tony Blair, Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, as an expression of the General
61 Assembly's great esteem for The Right Honorable Winston Spencer Churchill and gratitude for his
62 memorable visit to Richmond 60 years ago; and, be it
63 RESOLVED FINALLY, That the General Assembly, in commemoration of one of the Legislature's
64 and the Commonwealth's finest days in the seat of the capitol, reflect upon Mr. Churchill's message, his
65 leadership, and his enduring legacy and rise to meet the modern challenges charged to contemporary
66 statesmen and statehood.