

2006 SESSION

INTRODUCED

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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 72

Offered January 11, 2006

Prefiled January 10, 2006

Designating December 28, in 2006 and in each succeeding year, as "Innocents Day" in Virginia.

Patron—Scott, E.T.

Referred to Committee on Rules

WHEREAS, December 28th is recognized as a day of remembrance for the millions of innocent victims who have died due to violence and tragedy in the world for centuries; and

WHEREAS, remembering innocent victims who perish as a result of tragedy is an honored tradition in the history of mankind; and

WHEREAS, in many cultures and faith traditions, December 28 commemorates the massacre of the "Holy Innocents," considered the first Christian martyrs, and originally appears as a feast of the western church in the Leonine Sacramentary in the late 5th century; and

WHEREAS, the holiday is also called Childermas, Children's Mass, and Holy Innocents' Day and is celebrated on different dates by different faith traditions - the Syrians and Chaldeans commemorated the children on the December 27th; the Roman Catholic Church, the Church of England, and the Lutheran Church commemorated the children on December 28th; and the Eastern Orthodox Church commemorated them on the December 29th; and

WHEREAS, Holy Innocent's Day ritual appears in the Book of Common Prayer, which dates back to the Tudor period in England and was adopted by many Protestants who came to the New World, who revised and made it their own after the American Revolution; a prayer for the innocents from the book reads, in part, "Receive, we beseech thee, into the arms of mercy, all innocent victims, and establish thy rule of Justice, Love and Peace"; and

WHEREAS, the innocents we honor and remember are victims of all races, nationalities, sexes, ages, religions, and of no religion; and

WHEREAS, in the modern world, the innocent victims of violence include those who have died in all wars in every nation, including the conflict in Iraq; the terrorist attacks on September 11th; the Oklahoma City bombing of the federal building; the shootings at Columbine High School; the tragic massacre in Sudan; the nuclear bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki; the London Blitz; and the Holocaust; to name only a fraction of the millions of other innocents who have been lost; and

WHEREAS, the innocents that are honored on "Innocents Day" represent friends, mothers, fathers, children, other family members, veterans, and countless loved ones in the Commonwealth and around the world who have suffered and died as a result of violence and tragedy; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly designate December 28, in 2006 and in each succeeding year, as "Innocents Day" in Virginia; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates post the designation of December 28 as "Innocents Day" in Virginia on the General Assembly's website.

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