

2006 SESSION

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SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 174

Offered January 20, 2006

Commending Down in the Old Belt: Voices from the Tobacco South by James P. Crawford, Swinging Gate Productions, LLC.

Patrons—Hawkins, Puckett, Ruff and Wampler; Delegates: Byron, Dudley, Hogan, Johnson, Kilgore and Wright

WHEREAS, the outstanding documentary film, *Down in the Old Belt: Voices from the Tobacco South*, written, produced, and directed by James P. Crawford of Swinging Gate Productions, LLC, explores the history and culture of tobacco in the Old Belt of Virginia based on interviews and oral histories of 26 Old Belt tobacco farming families; and

WHEREAS, *Down in the Old Belt: Voices from the Tobacco South* was completed with major grant aid and support from the Virginia Foundation for the Humanities and Public Policy and in conjunction with Visual and Broadcast Communications of Virginia Tech; and

WHEREAS, the documentary film tells the history of tobacco in Virginia, from Jamestown to the Buyout, focusing on the Old Belt region of Southside Virginia—the birthplace of bright-leaf tobacco, which is flue-cured and also known as Virginia tobacco; and

WHEREAS, the Tobacco Buyout signals the end of the family tobacco farm and a tobacco culture with roots in the founding of America; and

WHEREAS, the documentary film depicts the cultural and economic changes affecting the Old Belt region, and the state as a whole, allowing tobacco farmers to speak for themselves while showing the impact these changes have had on individual growers, local businesses and industries, and communities throughout the region; and

WHEREAS, the documentary film, which is accessible to a broad public audience, presents the complex history of the Old Belt tobacco region and the cultural evolution occurring in agriculture throughout the United States today in a balanced and unbiased way; and

WHEREAS, *Down in the Old Belt: Voices from the Tobacco South* has been shown across Virginia, including in Danville, South Boston, Roanoke, and at Virginia Tech to much acclaim and is marketed to be broadcast in diverse venues in order to reach as broad an audience as possible, statewide and nationally; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the General Assembly commend *Down in the Old Belt: Voices from the Tobacco South* by James P. Crawford, Swinging Gate Productions, LLC, as an outstanding documentary film on the history and culture of tobacco in Virginia; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to James P. Crawford of Swinging Gate Productions, LLC as an expression of the General Assembly's gratitude and appreciation for his achievement.

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