

2006 SPECIAL SESSION I

INTRODUCED

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SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 5032

Offered June 6, 2006

Commending Virginia Girls State on the occasion of its 60th anniversary.

Patrons—Puller, Blevins, Colgan, Cuccinelli, Deeds, Devolites Davis, Hanger, Herring, Houck, Howell, Lambert, Locke, Lucas, Marsh, Martin, McDougle, Miller, Newman, Norment, Obenshain, O'Brien, Potts, Puckett, Quayle, Rerras, Reynolds, Saslaw, Stolle, Stosch, Ticer, Wampler, Watkins, Whipple and Williams

WHEREAS, Virginia Girls State, a week-long leadership and civics program for rising high school senior girls, celebrates its 60th anniversary in June 2006; and

WHEREAS, Virginia Girls State is part of a nationwide program sponsored by the American Legion Auxiliary to educate young women on the duties, privileges, rights, and responsibilities of American citizenship and to encourage them to become more active in politics and aspire to leadership roles in their communities; and

WHEREAS, approximately 600 girls from across the Commonwealth gather annually on the campus of Longwood University to participate in activities that closely mirror real life politics and government in action; and

WHEREAS, immediately immersed in the traditions, practices, and celebrations of democracy, participants break into 14 cities and two political parties, nominate candidates at party conventions, conduct elections, and practice self-governance by enacting laws and policies; and

WHEREAS, with the support and assistance of the staffs of the Senate Clerk's Office, the House Clerk's Office and the Division of Legislative Service, the girls who are elected by each city to serve in the legislature meet for several sessions to learn the legislative process, including the intricacies of bill drafting and the fine art of parliamentary procedures currently used by the Senate of Virginia and the House of Delegates; and

WHEREAS, other girls practice leadership skills by serving as judges, cabinet secretaries, and city officials; and 14 girls, one from each city, showcase their advocacy skills by competing for the opportunity to attend Girls Nation; and

WHEREAS, Girls Nation is held each summer in Washington, D.C., where representatives from Virginia will meet with participants from other states to debate and formulate federal policy as Girls Nation Senators; and

WHEREAS, in addition to providing hands-on experience in self-government, the Girls State program offers daily activity classes in athletics, art, band, chorus, basic CPR, parliamentary procedure, public speaking, National Guard, and women in government; the girls also meet in full session assemblies with Virginia's top elected officials in order to learn about public service opportunities and the pressing issues facing Virginians today; and

WHEREAS, the Virginia Girls State program also recognizes the many sacrifices made by the brave men and women who serve in the armed services to protect the freedoms and values of American democracy and a solemn and moving ceremony is held to remember and honor the MIAs of the Vietnam War; and

WHEREAS, on the final night of Virginia Girls State, participants attend a commencement and inaugural ceremony to share in a sense of pride in their numerous accomplishments during the week; and

WHEREAS, the quality of the Virginia Girls State program is a reflection of the enthusiasm of the girls to help and learn from each other and the dedication and public-spiritedness of the volunteers who devote their time and talent to making Virginia Girls State an enriching experience for everyone involved; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commend Virginia Girls State on the occasion of its 60th anniversary; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the American Legion Auxiliary as an expression of the General Assembly's appreciation for its longtime sponsorship of an outstanding program that enables the Commonwealth's youth to gain a fuller appreciation of American democracy and civic responsibility.

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