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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 615

Offered January 10, 2007

Prefiled January 5, 2007

Directing the Capitol Square Preservation Council to plan a commemoration of the 150th anniversary of the unveiling of the George Washington Equestrian Monument in Capitol Square. Report.

Patrons—O'Bannon and Griffith

Referred to Committee on Rules

WHEREAS, Governor Thomas Mann Randolph created, in 1822, a Washington Monument Fund to raise money for a monument in tribute to the service of one of Virginia's finest sons; and

WHEREAS, originally envisioned as a funerary monument to hold the remains of General Washington, the monument was instead designed to be a cenotaph, or empty tomb; and

WHEREAS, in 1850, sculptor Thomas Crawford won a national design competition to sculpt the monument, submitting a design for a bronze equestrian statue that included the standing figures of six significant Virginians, each representing events or ideals in the history of the state, who were later chosen to be: General Andrew Lewis (Colonial era), Patrick Henry (Revolution), George Mason (Bill of Rights), Thomas Jefferson (Independence), Thomas Nelson (Finance), and John Marshall (Justice); and

WHEREAS, crafted in Rome and shipped to Virginia, the statue was a remarkable technical achievement both for Crawford, for designing the horse to balance on two legs, and for Otto von Miller, who managed to cast the body of the horse in one piece; and

WHEREAS, although Crawford died before the statue was completed, the incomplete monument was unveiled on February 22, 1858, the 126th anniversary of Washington's birth; and

WHEREAS, Randolph Rogers completed the monument after Crawford's death, adding six allegorical trophy groups for the base; and

WHEREAS, with the outbreak of the American Civil War in 1861 temporarily halting progress on the monument, its final figures were installed in June 1869; and

WHEREAS, the George Washington Equestrian Monument has long served as a symbol of pride, power, and perseverance for the Commonwealth; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the Capitol Square Preservation Council be directed to plan a commemoration of the 150th anniversary of the unveiling of the George Washington Equestrian Monument in Capitol Square.

The Capitol Square Preservation Council shall submit to the Division of Legislative Automated Systems an executive summary and report of its progress in meeting the directive of this resolution no later than the first day of the 2008 Regular Session of the General Assembly. The executive summary and report shall be submitted for publication as a report document as provided in the procedures of the Division of Legislative Automated Systems for the processing of legislative documents and reports and shall be posted on the General Assembly's website.

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