

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 225

Commending The Lincoln Society of Virginia.

Agreed to by the House of Delegates, January 18, 2008

Agreed to by the Senate, January 24, 2008

WHEREAS, on February 12, 2009, the nation will commemorate the 200th anniversary of the birth of Abraham Lincoln, 16th President of the United States, considered by many citizens to have been the greatest American president; and

WHEREAS, Abraham Lincoln, sketching out his life five months before receiving his party's nomination for President, wrote, "I was born Feb. 12, 1809, in Hardin County, Kentucky. My parents were both born in Virginia, of undistinguished families—second families, perhaps I should say"; and

WHEREAS, Abraham Lincoln, a central figure in American history, fervently resolved to preserve the nation, and "he wished not only to save his country, but also to make it worthy of the saving, a place where all would have the right to rise"; and

WHEREAS, at the dedication of the military cemetery at Gettysburg he rededicated the nation to freedom and democracy stating, "The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it, far above our poor power to add or detract. The world will little note nor long remember what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here. It is for us the living, rather, to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us—that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion—that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain—that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom—and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth," and the principles that he espoused remain a core part of the American value system; and

WHEREAS, as President and Commander-in-Chief of these United States at a time when the Union was torn asunder, Abraham Lincoln guided the country through the most devastating experience in its national history, and on December 3, 1861, he addressed the Congress: "The struggle of today is not altogether for today—it is for a vast future also," apparently understanding, predicting, and warning future generations that the reverberations of the Civil War and the struggle for human rights would persist well into our own time; and

WHEREAS, The Lincoln Society of Virginia was founded in 2004 to commemorate and disseminate information about Lincoln Family connections in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia, to acquire, protect, and preserve Lincoln landmarks in the Shenandoah Valley, including the Lincoln Homestead residence and the Lincoln Cemetery in Rockingham County, and to support efforts to interpret Abraham Lincoln, his life, work, and legacy, particularly in Virginia; and

WHEREAS, The Lincoln Society of Virginia promotes research and provides information and educational programs about President Abraham Lincoln, including his life, work, significance in American history, lessons to be learned from his life, and special focus on his connections with Rockingham County, Virginia; and

WHEREAS, each year, on the anniversary of his birth, The Lincoln Society of Virginia hosts the Lincoln Day Ceremony at the Lincoln Homestead Cemetery; and symposia, colloquia, and other educational and cultural programs and events related to Abraham Lincoln, historical figures, and the political, historical, economic, and social episodes of his time are offered to scholars, researchers, and the public throughout the year; and

WHEREAS, The Lincoln Society of Virginia has contributed significantly to the outstanding collection of scholarly work and inquiry into the life and presidency of Abraham Lincoln, and through its programs has helped to promote a better understanding of the 16th President of the United States and the historical context and social milieu of his time; and

WHEREAS, with the creation of the Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission by Congress, the nation is poised to commemorate the 200th anniversary of the birth of Abraham Lincoln on February 12, 2009, and numerous states, historical societies, museums, and other organizations throughout the country are planning or have already implemented commemorative events leading to this singular national event; and

WHEREAS, The Lincoln Society of Virginia, working collaboratively with the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Commission, will embark upon various educational and cultural programs and activities during the commemorative period to join with the nation in observing the bicentennial of

President Abraham Lincoln; and

WHEREAS, the annual Lincoln Day Ceremony at the Lincoln Homestead Cemetery on February 12, 2008, sponsored by The Lincoln Society of Virginia, will inaugurate the commemoration period of the 200th anniversary of the birth of President Abraham Lincoln in Virginia; and

WHEREAS, it is appropriate to commend The Lincoln Society of Virginia for its dedicated work and leadership in preserving and interpreting such historic landmarks and a significant part of Virginia's and the nation's heritage, and for maximizing the opportunity through the national commemoration to further enlighten citizens concerning the life, times, presidency, and legacy of President Abraham Lincoln, particularly emphasizing his indubitable ties to the Commonwealth; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commend The Lincoln Society of Virginia for its work to advance understanding and appreciation of the presidency of the 16th President of the United States, and to promote the national observance of the 200th anniversary of the birth of Abraham Lincoln in Virginia; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the president of The Lincoln Society of Virginia as an expression of the General Assembly's appreciation for the Society's outstanding work and service to the Commonwealth.