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SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 184

Offered February 12, 2008

Commending James Madison University on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of its founding.

Patrons—Hanger and Obenshain

WHEREAS, the 1904 Session of the General Assembly authorized the establishment of a new "normal" school for women, so named because it was designed to set a standard or "norm" of excellence, in an effort to provide more equitable funding for state women's colleges; and

WHEREAS, twenty-eight cities and towns throughout Virginia expressed an interest in having the school located in their community and members of the General Assembly committee visited all 28 localities; early in 1908, the delegation visited Harrisonburg and was treated to a tour of the city and an exhibition by the Harrisonburg Fire Department, followed by a sumptuous meal; and

WHEREAS, when the General Assembly convened in 1908, the number of possible locations was finally reduced to Harrisonburg and Fredericksburg, and the legislature became hopelessly deadlocked with the House of Delegates favoring Fredericksburg and the Senate favoring Harrisonburg; the formidable advocate for Harrisonburg was Senator George B. Keezell, a six-foot-six giant of a man known as the "Tall Sycamore of Cub Run"; and

WHEREAS, the General Assembly agreed in a late-evening session on March 10, 1908, to fund schools for both Harrisonburg and Fredericksburg; and when the news reached Harrisonburg around 10:15 p.m., a prolonged blast of the city's fire whistle announced the successful result to the city's sleeping citizens; and

WHEREAS, Senator Keezell and Delegate P. B. F. Good arrived home in Harrisonburg on March 12, 1908, and were greeted by the biggest public welcome since President William McKinley visited the city in 1899—a parade marched through the city and Mayor O. B. Roller declared that the day was the "proudest moment in the history of Harrisonburg"; and

WHEREAS, on March 14, 1908, Governor Claude A. Swanson signed legislation that created the State Normal and Industrial School for Women at Harrisonburg, now James Madison University (JMU), and the State Normal and Industrial School for Women at Fredericksburg, now the University of Mary Washington; and

WHEREAS, plans moved quickly for the new school in Harrisonburg and a board of trustees was appointed and Julian A. Burruss of Richmond was named president; land for a campus was purchased, the faculty was hired, and the first students were recruited; and

WHEREAS, on September 30, 1909, the Harrisonburg Normal School began classes with an enrollment of 150 students taught by 15 faculty members in two buildings on a 48-acre campus; and

WHEREAS, James Madison University has operated under five different names—State Normal and Industrial School for Women at Harrisonburg from 1908 to 1914, State Normal School for Women at Harrisonburg from 1914 to 1924, State Teachers College at Harrisonburg from 1924 to 1938, Madison College from 1938 to 1977, and finally James Madison University from 1977 to the present; and

WHEREAS, originally, the normal school offered only post-high school classes and a two-year diploma program until bachelor's degrees were authorized in 1916, followed by the offering of master's degrees in 1954 and doctoral degrees in 1994; today, JMU offers over 100 programs at the bachelor's, master's, and doctoral levels; and

WHEREAS, James Madison University has had five distinguished presidents—Julian A. Burruss, 1908 - 1919; Samuel Page Duke, 1919 - 1949; G. Tyler Miller, 1949 - 1971; Ronald E. Carrier, 1971 - 1998; and current president, Linwood H. Rose, 1998-present; and

WHEREAS, James Madison University has grown to more than 17,000 students with over 2,400 outstanding full-time faculty and staff and more than 100 major buildings on a beautiful 675-acre campus; and

WHEREAS, the 100,000th graduate of JMU will graduate at the May commencement ceremony, which will conclude the university's historic centennial celebration; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the General Assembly commend James Madison University for providing the citizens of the Commonwealth with continuing excellence in higher education for the past century; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to Linwood H. Rose, the president of James Madison University, as an expression of the General Assembly's admiration for the exemplary institution and best wishes for continued success in the future.

INTRODUCED

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