

2008 SESSION

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SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 204

Offered February 18, 2008

Commending the Historic 1908 Courthouse on the occasion of its 100th anniversary.

Patrons—Wampler and Reynolds

WHEREAS, in 1842, when Carroll County was separated from Grayson County, a new and more centrally located county seat was needed to serve the community; and

WHEREAS, in 1849, the General Assembly appointed commissioners from Wythe, Smyth, and Washington counties to select a new site for a courthouse, and from the top of Point Lookout Mountain, they selected a spot located near five springs surrounded by a grove of oak trees and called the town Independence; and

WHEREAS, the first courthouse was built in Independence in 1850 in the town square, now the intersection of Routes 58 and 21, and the court first convened in April 1851; and

WHEREAS, the court met four times a year and citizens in Independence could settle disputes, record deeds and marriages, and conduct all matters of legal business at the courthouse; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Independence grew and prospered and soon residents had built a community with a hotel, tavern, stables, businesses and shops, and personal residences; and

WHEREAS, the 1850 Courthouse was condemned in 1905, because its structure had begun to deteriorate, and a new courthouse was built in 1908 for the sum of \$25,500 and first occupied on March 1, 1909; and

WHEREAS, the 1908 Courthouse exemplifies Richardsonian-style architecture common to public buildings built between 1865 and 1915, and its massive size, arched windows, Byzantine decorations, Flemish gables, octagonal towers, hip roof, and stone and brick construction make the building an historic treasure; and

WHEREAS, the 1908 Courthouse served as the Grayson County Courthouse until 1980, when the building was sold in 1985 to Dan D. Baldwin, and he generously donated it to the people of Grayson County in 1986; and

WHEREAS, today, the Historic 1908 Courthouse is administered and maintained by the 1908 Courthouse Foundation and serves as the art and cultural center of Grayson County, housing the Grayson Crossroads Museum, The Treasury, Visitor Center, a retail shop showcasing Appalachian arts and crafts, as well as the Baldwin Auditorium, a multiuse community events hall; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the General Assembly commend and congratulate the Historic 1908 Courthouse on the occasion of its 100th anniversary; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the 1908 Courthouse Foundation as an expression of the General Assembly's appreciation of the Historic 1908 Courthouse's rich history and significance to the Town of Independence and Grayson County and best wishes for a joyous centennial celebration.

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