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## SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 448

Offered February 16, 2009

*Commending the Virginia Economic Bridge on the occasion of its 20th anniversary.*

Patrons—Puckett, Deeds, Edwards, Hanger, McDougle, Petersen, Puller, Quayle, Reynolds, Smith, Ticer and Wampler; Delegates: Armstrong, Bowling, Bulova, Caputo, Carrico, Cox, Crockett-Stark, Hall, Hull, Johnson, Kilgore, Lohr, Merricks, Nichols, Nutter, Orrock, Phillips, Plum, Poindexter, Putney, Scott, E.T., Scott, J.M., Shuler, Vanderhye, Ware, O. and Watts

WHEREAS, the Virginia Economic Bridge is recognized in 2009 for its extraordinary service to the citizens of the Commonwealth ; and

WHEREAS, following the unprecedented economic growth in Northern Virginia during the decade of the 1980s, a concerned group of leaders in business, government, and education organized the Virginia initiative to promote economic expansion statewide by matching economic and business resources in one region of the Commonwealth with the needs and potential of another; and

WHEREAS, the formation of the Virginia Economic Bridge resulted from initial funding provided by the Center for Innovative Technology and the Appalachian Regional Commission; and

WHEREAS, George Mason University was instrumental in the founding of the Virginia Economic Bridge and has remained a strong partner of the organization and is responsible for much of its longevity and success; and

WHEREAS, over the past 20 years, the Virginia Economic Bridge has been an engaged and collaborative partner with Virginia's Center for Rural Virginia, Community College System, Department of Business Assistance, Department of Minority Business Enterprise, Department of Education, Economic Development Partnership, Employment Commission, State Council of Higher Education for Virginia, Tourism Corporation, Tobacco Indemnification and Community Revitalization Commission and Workforce Network for the development of successful programs; and

WHEREAS, the Virginia Economic Bridge was instrumental in the location of the AT&T Relay Center in Norton, Virginia; and

WHEREAS, the Virginia Economic Bridge has awarded nearly \$100,000 in awards to entrepreneurs in Southwest Virginia; and

WHEREAS, over the past 20 years, the Virginia Economic Bridge has been at the forefront of the development of successful programs—the Virginia Procurement Pipeline, Virginia's Business Pipeline, the VEB Entrepreneurship Award, the Linked Workforce Initiative, the Linked Workforce Showcase and Workforce Connections, the Regional GIS Telecommunication Infrastructure Mapping Project, the New River Mount Rogers Workforce Investment Board's Community Audit, the Virginia Community Analysis, Research and Development Program, Virginia's Great Southwest Online Program and the Southwestern and Western Virginia Public Education Consortiums—each of which initiates economic prosperity in Southwest Virginia; and

WHEREAS, in 2004 the Virginia Economic Bridge initiated and provided administrative support for the Twentieth Anniversary of the Southwest Virginia Economic Development Commission (The Lacy Commission); and

WHEREAS, the Return to Roots Program, administered by the Virginia Economic Bridge, has become a national model for recruiting talent to rural regions; and

WHEREAS, for 20 years, business, civic, municipal, and state leadership has contributed greatly to the continued success of the Virginia Economic Bridge; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commend and congratulate the Virginia Economic Bridge on the occasion of its 20th anniversary; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to Carl E. Mitchell, President and CEO of the Virginia Economic Bridge, as an expression of the General Assembly's gratitude for the vital service provided by all of the outstanding programs and services to the citizens of the Commonwealth.

INTRODUCED

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