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SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 494

Offered February 17, 2011

Commending the George Washington Regional Commission.

Patron—Houck

WHEREAS, the George Washington Regional Commission, the planning district commission for Virginia Planning District 16, which encompasses the City of Fredericksburg and the Counties of Caroline, King George, Spotsylvania, and Stafford, will celebrate 50 years of service to the region in 2011; and

WHEREAS, originally established as the Rappahannock Development Association in 1961, the George Washington Regional Commission has undergone several name changes and expanded duties to better serve the needs of the region; and

WHEREAS, Virginia Planning District 16 is the fourth largest of the Commonwealth's 21 planning regions with a population of 320,000 and is also the fastest growing, having experienced a 33 percent growth in population during the past decade; and

WHEREAS, the George Washington Regional Commission provides a wide array of services to the region, including the operation of GWRideConnect, a ridesharing service; land-use, hazard mitigation, and environmental planning programs; and operation of a state-of-the-art geographic information system; and

WHEREAS, the George Washington Regional Commission also manages and operates the regional Homeless Management Information System and serves as the fiscal agent for the Rappahannock River Basin Commission and the Regional Legislative Liaison Program, in addition to providing staff to the Fredericksburg Area Metropolitan Planning Organization; and

WHEREAS, despite difficult economic times, the George Washington Regional Commission has secured or assisted in securing more than \$33 million in discretionary transportation funding for the region since 2006; and

WHEREAS, the George Washington Regional Commission has played a vital role in regional planning initiatives, establishing and staffing the regional Affordable Housing Task Force, creating a regional clearinghouse for geographic information systems data, and bringing the region's first responders together to improve emergency communications; and

WHEREAS, the George Washington Regional Commission also contributes to regional environmental planning, provides local technical assistance, and performs demographic analysis; and

WHEREAS, the George Washington Regional Commission's operation of GWRideConnect has saved local commuters time and money while helping decrease traffic congestion; and

WHEREAS, the George Washington Regional Commission's contributions to Virginia Planning District 16 and the Commonwealth have been numerous and noteworthy during its 50 years of operation, helping make the City of Fredericksburg and the Counties of Caroline, King George, Spotsylvania, and Stafford great places in which to live and work; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the General Assembly commend the George Washington Regional Commission on the occasion of its 50th anniversary; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the George Washington Regional Commission as an expression of the General Assembly's appreciation for the Commission's years of dedicated service to the citizens of Virginia Planning District 16 and the Commonwealth.