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SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 35

Offered February 25, 2011

Commending the Richmond Outreach Center.

Patron—Marsh

Unanimous consent to introduce

WHEREAS, the Richmond Outreach Center, established in 2001 by Senior Pastor Geronimo Aguilar and his wife, Samantha, is a place where local churches, civic groups, and individuals convene to work together to serve the inner city and the urban poor; and

WHEREAS, the Richmond Outreach Center serves more than 9,000 people each week through its church services and more than 150 ministries, which are all dedicated to serving the inner city of Richmond; and

WHEREAS, considered one of the fastest growing churches in America, the Richmond Outreach Center has affiliate ministries in the Counties of Caroline and Tazewell, the Cities of Petersburg and Charlottesville, and in Orlando and Daytona Beach, Florida, and Costa Rica; and

WHEREAS, the Richmond Outreach Center provides ministry at two facilities, a school of urban ministry, thrift stores, eight homes for individuals overcoming substance abuse addictions, and discipleship homes throughout the city; it has made an extraordinary impact on the citizens of Richmond and the Commonwealth, averaging 9,352 persons served by its ministries between 2009 and 2010; and

WHEREAS, child-care services, after-school and summer programs, marriage and parenting classes, English as a Second Language classes, a food pantry, the homeless bus ministry, the Whosoever Kids Bus ministry, ROC on the Road outreaches, the La Roca Spanish Ministry, dance and athletic teams, and computer classes that give a refurbished computer to each graduate are but a few of the programs through which the Richmond Outreach Center provides love, consistency, and hope to those most in need; and

WHEREAS, in 2010, the Richmond Outreach Center served more than 560,510 meals to the hungry and provided health care at its Love of Jesus Health Clinic to more than 4,100 patients who otherwise would not have received medical services; and

WHEREAS, an additional 31 new ministries were established by the Richmond Outreach Center in 2010, including Generation, La Roca Bible Study, ROC Singles, Spanish Soulwinning, ROC Tutoring in 14 local schools, ROC Bible Institute, ROC Cafe, ROC Fight Club, ROC Childcare, Commercial Driver's License classes, La ROCA Kids Service, two new discipleship homes, a Spanish food ministry, and four new after-school program locations; these new ministries serve at least 2,419 individuals every week; and

WHEREAS, in furtherance of its mission, "Changing Lives and Making Life Changers," youth and adults are introduced to positive, constructive lifestyles that are free of drugs, alcohol, crime, and violence; all Richmond Outreach Center programs and services are provided without charge to help sustain permanent, positive change through significant, personal, and long-term investments in persons who are served by its ministries and programs; and

WHEREAS, the Richmond Outreach Center is actively involved in the community by partnering with a private school that targets at-risk urban youth and by working collaboratively with the Richmond Police Department and the Virginia Office of the Attorney General to combat crime and gang-related activity in Richmond; youth programs offered by the Richmond Outreach Center have been highlighted by the United States Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention in its manual, Best Practices to Address Community Gang Problems; and

WHEREAS, through the vast and dedicated ministry of the Richmond Outreach Center, thousands of persons living in low-income urban areas have their immediate needs met, are succored while transforming their lives, and are given the opportunity to return as catalysts for hope and positive change in their communities; and

WHEREAS, Pastor Geronimo Aguilar, founding pastor of the Richmond Outreach Center, is praised for his vision and desire to serve the urban poor; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate of Virginia, That the Richmond Outreach Center hereby be commended; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to Pastor Geronimo Aguilar, founding pastor of the Richmond Outreach Center, requesting that he further disseminate copies of this resolution to the congregation and community and civic organizations with whom he collaborates in ministry, in order that they may be apprised of the Senate of

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59 Virginia's appreciation of and admiration for their extraordinary service to the citizens of the City of
60 Richmond.