

12103082D

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 277

Offered January 26, 2012

Commending Kevin Lunsmann.

Patrons—Byron, Cline, Fariss, Garrett, Howell, W.J. and Putney; Senator: Newman

WHEREAS, Kevin Lunsmann, a remarkable young man from Campbell County, has returned safely to his family after being held as a hostage for five months in the Philippines; and

WHEREAS, Kevin Lunsmann, who had been scheduled to start Brookville High School as a freshman in the fall of 2011, and his mother were visiting family in July on an island near Zamboanga City in the Philippines when he and his mother, along with a local cousin, were kidnapped; and

WHEREAS, the kidnappers, believed to be part of Abu Sayyaf, an al-Qaida-linked Islamic militant group notorious for beheading their hostages, held Kevin Lunsmann's mother until her release in October, while his cousin escaped from the group in November; and

WHEREAS, family members, friends, and the school and local community were shocked to learn that Kevin Lunsmann and his mother had been kidnapped and prayed for their safe return; and

WHEREAS, Kevin Lunsmann's family in Campbell County underwent a harrowing ordeal as the kidnappers contacted them to demand a large ransom for his return; and

WHEREAS, during his five-month captivity, Kevin Lunsmann carefully observed his captors and surroundings while formulating a plan to escape and return to his family; and

WHEREAS, at an opportune moment, Kevin Lunsmann eluded the people guarding him and followed a river down a mountain, spending two days in the jungle before being found by friendly jungle villagers; and

WHEREAS, during his two-day trek to freedom, Kevin Lunsmann walked through heavy mud, streams, and mountainous terrain wearing only *tsinelas* (flip flops) until he found a pair of shoes in an abandoned hut; and

WHEREAS, Kevin Lunsmann maintained his energy by eating the flesh of coconuts that had fallen on the ground and climbed banana trees to find food to eat; and

WHEREAS, a remarkably courageous and resourceful young man, Kevin Lunsmann demonstrated great fortitude, ingenuity, and determination when faced with an extraordinary situation in a foreign country; and

WHEREAS, now safely back in Virginia, Kevin Lunsmann has started his studies at Brookville High School and looks forward to spending time with his family and friends; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commend a courageous young Virginian, Kevin Lunsmann; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to Kevin Lunsmann as an expression of the General Assembly's admiration and respect for his strong spirit.

INTRODUCED

HJ277