

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 357

Commending the Town of Luray on the occasion of its 200th anniversary.

Agreed to by the House of Delegates, February 17, 2012

Agreed to by the Senate, February 23, 2012

WHEREAS, on February 6, 1812, the General Assembly passed an act calling for the establishment of the Town of Luray from 10 acres of land owned by Isaac Ruffner, with Williams Marye, John B. Whiting, John W. Abbott, and Jonas Ruffner being appointed as trustees; and

WHEREAS, on August 21, 1812, the trustees, with surveyor James Modesett, laid off a Main Street, known then as Peter Street; three side streets, known then as Water Street, High Street, and West Street; and 18 lots, which were later sold; and

WHEREAS, in 1831 Page County was formed from parts of Shenandoah and Rockingham Counties and the Town of Luray was made the county seat; and

WHEREAS, the residents of Luray were deeply involved in the American Civil War, fighting with honor on battlefields from First Manassas to Gettysburg and beyond as members of units such as the "Page Grays" of Company H of the 33 Regiment of the Stonewall Brigade and Company F of the Laurel Brigade; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Luray saw Union and Confederate forces clash at the Battle of Luray, fought on September 24, 1864; and

WHEREAS, after claiming victory at the Battle of Fisher's Hill, Union General Philip Sheridan sent 6,000 troops under Brigadier General Alfred Torbert into the Luray Valley, where General Torbert's troops defeated 1,200 Confederate cavalry under the command of Brigadier General Williams Wickham; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Luray was incorporated by the General Assembly as a result of Chapter 191 of the 1871 Acts of Assembly; and

WHEREAS, in 1878 the discovery of Luray Caverns created a thriving tourist industry for the Shenandoah Valley and the Commonwealth that continues to this day, with visitors from around the world having the opportunity to explore this unique underground attraction; and

WHEREAS, home to the headquarters of Shenandoah National Park and the Cabin Capital of Virginia, Luray's picturesque landscape and natural beauty draw outdoor enthusiasts to the area during all seasons; and

WHEREAS, since its Civil War days, Luray has been the home of many notable military leaders, including Confederate General Thomas Jordan; United States Army General Edward Mallory "Ned" Almond, who commanded the Army's X Corps during the Korean War; and Donald Edward Keyhoe, a United States Marine Corps naval aviator; and

WHEREAS, acclaimed sculptors William Randolph Barbee and his son, Herbert, both trace their roots to the Town of Luray; and

WHEREAS, Peter Bouck Borst, the president of the Shenandoah Valley Railroad and county delegate to Virginia's Secession Convention of 1861, was an active participant in the mid-19th century development of Page County; and

WHEREAS, other prominent politicians from Luray include Robert Franklin Leedy, an attorney and Virginia state legislator; Charles Frederick Crisp, a leader in the Congressional Democratic party who served as Speaker of the United States House of Representatives and whose son, Charles R. Crisp, also served in Congress; and Allen Louderback, a member of the Virginia House of Delegates; and

WHEREAS, today, the Town of Luray boasts a thriving downtown with restaurants and shops located close to the Luray-Hawksbill Greenway, a paved two-mile walking and biking trail that allows users to observe the area's scenic beauty; and

WHEREAS, residents and visitors alike enjoy music and other local activities at the Ruffner Plaza on the Greenway and the BB&T Center for Performing Arts of Luray while those exploring the town's history can visit the newly restored train depot and museum; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Luray offers small town charm and a friendly atmosphere with access to the great natural wonders of the Commonwealth, making it the perfect place in which to live and work and visit; and

WHEREAS, as the Town of Luray proudly celebrates its bicentennial, it takes great pride in remembering its history and the contributions its citizens have made to the local area, Commonwealth, and nation; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commend the Town of Luray on the occasion of its 200th anniversary; and, be it

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RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to Rick Black, manager of the Town of Luray, as an expression of the General Assembly's admiration for the Town's long and stellar history.