

2012 SESSION

ENROLLED

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 366

Commending Grove Baptist Church.

Agreed to by the House of Delegates, February 17, 2012
Agreed to by the Senate, February 23, 2012

WHEREAS, historic Grove Baptist Church in Fauquier County's Goldvein community celebrated its 200th anniversary on October 9, 2011; and

WHEREAS, the beginnings of Grove Baptist Church can be traced to a local house, which many believe to have been the home of Dinah and James Thompson, where, in the late eighteenth century, itinerant preachers regularly were invited to proclaim a message of faith; soon a community of believers was established with this house as the group's place of worship; and

WHEREAS, Thomas Skinker, a wealthy bachelor who lived in the area, deeded land and a building to the Baptist community in 1795, stipulating that the site would always be owned by Baptist elders; the building was located in a grove of trees, thus providing a fitting name for the church; and

WHEREAS, Grove Baptist Church came into existence on October 12, 1811, when 55 members of nearby Hartwood Baptist Church were sent to form Grove Baptist Church; it would be established at the site that Thomas Skinker deeded to the Baptists, and two of those 55 members were Dinah and James Thompson; and

WHEREAS, two centuries later, Grove Baptist Church still stands at the same site, the attractive and sturdy stone building has survived through the decades, weathering war-time ravages and storms; over time the church has acquired more land and added more buildings; and

WHEREAS, Grove Baptist Church has reflected the growth of Fauquier County; in its early days, the congregation gathered only for worship and fellowship, then a Sunday school was established in 1859; and

WHEREAS, the church, which was occupied by soldiers during the Civil War, was badly damaged, and restoring and rebuilding Grove Baptist Church took years; the first donation, collected in 1866, was \$30.50, and the renovation was completed in 1900; and

WHEREAS, major upgrades occurred at Grove Baptist Church during the last century, including the installation of electricity in 1941, an elevated pulpit and choir area above a baptistery in 1969, and the addition of a steeple with chimes and installation of central heating and air conditioning in 1980 and 1981; and

WHEREAS, the first musical instrument purchased for Grove Baptist Church was a drum in 1884; in subsequent years, hymnals, pianos, and organs became a vital part of worship, and, today, an advanced sound system is installed at the church; and

WHEREAS, for much of its history, the church stayed small with a total cumulative membership of approximately 1,500 worshippers; the first building expansion was in 1964 with the opening of a newly constructed Educational Building; and

WHEREAS, inside Grove Baptist Church, visitors see a beautiful wooden cross over the pulpit, a special wooden music stand, and wooden offering plates all of which were made from a tree that once stood outside the church—part of the original grove; and

WHEREAS, like many other small congregations, Grove Baptist Church shared its pastor with other local churches and not until 1965 did Grove Baptist Church hire a full-time pastor; Grove Baptist Church continues to grow and thrive in the twenty-first century and a Fellowship Hall was built in 2004; and

WHEREAS, from this shady site, members of Grove Baptist Church have proclaimed the word of God, gone out to preach the Gospel, and helped to form other Baptist congregations; today the church has a teen ministry, a seniors program, and an AWANA children's ministry; and

WHEREAS, the current pastor of Grove Baptist Church, Ronald Roach, who has served since 1986, is the 19th pastor in 200 years; the church encourages people to "Enter to worship, Depart to Serve"; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commend Grove Baptist Church on its 200th anniversary; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to Grove Baptist Church as an expression of the General Assembly's respect and best wishes in its next centuries of worship and service.

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