

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 415

Commending the United States Coast Guard for its American War of 1812 Revenue Cutters Service.

Agreed to by the House of Delegates, February 24, 2012

Agreed to by the Senate, March 1, 2012

WHEREAS, in 1783, at the end of the American Revolution, resentment and hostilities increased between Great Britain and America due to British failure to withdraw from American territory along the Great Lakes, support of Native Americans on the frontiers, frustration over British maritime policies, violation of American rights on the seas, and the impressment of Americans into the British naval service; and

WHEREAS, these social and political forces had an adverse economic effect and produced an untenable situation for the fledgling democracy, creating a climate for war; President James Madison declared war on Great Britain on June 18, 1812, and the "Second War of American Independence" was fought between the United States and Great Britain from June 18, 1812, through February 18, 1815, in Virginia and Maryland, and along the Canadian border, the western frontier, the Gulf Coast, and through naval engagements on the Great Lakes and the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans; and

WHEREAS, an estimated 70,000 Virginians served during the American War of 1812; there were approximately 73 armed encounters with the British in Virginia during the war, and Virginians actively fought in Maryland, Virginia, and Ohio and in naval engagements; and

WHEREAS, the nation's capital, strategically located off the Chesapeake Bay, was a prime target for the British, and the coast of Virginia figured prominently in the Atlantic theatre of operations; and

WHEREAS, in 1790 Congress established the United States Revenue Cutter Service and commissioned armed ocean-going vessels to enforce tariff and maritime law; the Revenue Cutter Service was the forerunner of the United States Coast Guard, the oldest continuous federal authority engaged in service on the seas; and

WHEREAS, three revenue cutters operated in the Hampton Roads region during the American War of 1812: the *Gallatin*, *Surveyor*, and *Thomas Jefferson*; and

WHEREAS, the *Gallatin*, captained by Edward Herbert of Norfolk, served out of Norfolk for one year, working alongside the *Thomas Jefferson*, patrolling, escorting ships, and passing intelligence gathered on the British squadron off the Virginia Capes; and

WHEREAS, the *Surveyor*, commissioned in September 1807 and captained by Samuel Travis of Williamsburg, patrolled the Chesapeake Bay and after a heroic struggle to defend the ship off Gloucester Point, the cutter was overwhelmed by a British boarding force and captured; and

WHEREAS, during the war, the *Thomas Jefferson*, captained by William Ham of Norfolk, made the first maritime capture of the war, provided law enforcement for the port of Norfolk and captured Royal Navy barges and personnel in engagements in its patrol area; and

WHEREAS, the American War of 1812 ended with the signing of the Treaty of Ghent on December 24, 1814, although word of the treaty did not reach the United States until after the Battle of New Orleans on January 8, 1815; and

WHEREAS, the American War of 1812 helped forge a national identity among the American states and laid the groundwork for a national system of homeland defense and a professional military within the United States; and

WHEREAS, the observance of the bicentennial of this important war provides an opportunity for Virginians and all Americans to remember the sacrifices and contributions of the revenue cutters and to appreciate and celebrate the independence for which valiant soldiers and sailors courageously fought; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting and appropriate to commemorate the revenue cutters *Gallatin*, *Surveyor*, and *Thomas Jefferson*, early vessels of the Revenue Cutter Service, forerunner of the United States Coast Guard, for their brave protection of the Hampton Roads region during the American War of 1812; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the United States Coast Guard be commended for its American War of 1812 Revenue Cutters Service; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to Admiral Robert J. Papp, Jr., Commandant of the United States Coast Guard, requesting that he further disseminate copies of this resolution to his constituents so that they may be apprised of the sense of the General Assembly of Virginia in this matter.