

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 146

Commending the work of the Fort Monroe Authority, Citizens for a Fort Monroe National Park, Hampton City Council, Governor of Virginia, Virginia Department of Historic Resources, Preservation Virginia, and the National Park Service for their work in establishing Fort Monroe National Monument.

Agreed to by the Senate, February 14, 2012
 Agreed to by the House of Delegates, February 17, 2012

WHEREAS, in 2005, the Base Realignment and Closure Commission approved the recommendation by the Secretary of Defense to close Fort Monroe as an Army post; and

WHEREAS, in 2007, the General Assembly created the Fort Monroe Federal Area Development Authority to, among other matters, study, plan and recommend the best use of the resources that will remain when the Army vacates the post; and

WHEREAS, in 2008, after considerable deliberation and public discourse, the Fort Monroe Federal Area Development Authority approved the Fort Monroe Reuse Plan that recognized five distinct areas within the 565-acre site for future development and stewardship based on their characteristics; and

WHEREAS, in 2010, the General Assembly created the Fort Monroe Authority as the successor to the Fort Monroe Federal Area Development Authority designating it to be responsible for the preservation and maintenance of the property on behalf of the Commonwealth; and

WHEREAS, the Citizens for a Fort Monroe National Park, whose mission is to establish a Grand Public Place with a substantial unit of the National Park Service at its core, began regular monthly public meetings and served as a volunteer advocacy group to support the creation of a National Park Service unit at Fort Monroe; and

WHEREAS, there exists a Programmatic Agreement among the United States Army, the Virginia State Historic Preservation Officer, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, the Fort Monroe Authority and the National Park Service and was developed with twenty-seven consulting parties; and

WHEREAS, such Programmatic Agreement establishes commitments to and processes for the appropriate stewardship of Fort Monroe, and articulated the desire to not take any action which would preclude the use of Fort Monroe as a National Park until consulting with the National Park Service; and

WHEREAS, the Citizens for a Fort Monroe National Park and City of Hampton Mayor Molly Ward worked together to lobby Congress and the President to establish a National Park Service unit at Fort Monroe; and

WHEREAS, Governor Robert F. McDonnell wrote a letter to Secretary of Interior Ken Salazar expressing his strong support for a National Park at Fort Monroe and outlining the boundaries of such a park; and

WHEREAS, at the urging of the Hampton City Council, the citizens of Hampton Roads rallied in a massive show of support during President Obama's visit to the region on October 19, 2011, by launching a "Green Initiative" encouraging everyone to wear green to support the cause; and

WHEREAS, on November 1, 2011, President Obama signed a proclamation under the Antiquities Act designating approximately 244 acres of the property at Fort Monroe as a National Monument and an additional 80 acres preserved by a protective easement; and

WHEREAS, the Fort Monroe National Monument is currently comprised of two parcels and separated by land that shall be owned by the Commonwealth of Virginia; and

WHEREAS, the Citizens for a Fort Monroe National Park, along with other interested parties, has advocated for Wherry Quarter to be designed in a fashion that preserves and protects viewsheds between the Chesapeake Bay and the fortress to the maximum extent possible; and

WHEREAS, the Citizens for a Fort Monroe National Park, along with other interested parties, has advocated for the development and use of Fort Monroe to be designed and undertaken in such a manner that at some point in time the two bifurcated National Park Service parcels could be permanently and substantially connected by the land owned by the Commonwealth of Virginia that now separates the two parcels; and

WHEREAS, the Citizens for a Fort Monroe National Park, along with other interested parties, has also encouraged the maintenance of Batteries Parrott and Irwin and the land that lies between them and the Wherry Quarter on the Bay side of Fenwick Road in a manner that would allow at some point for them to be joined with adjacent National Park Service properties in a unified national park unit and discouraged development between the bifurcated parcels of the Fort Monroe National Monument on any land designated as public open space in the Master Plan for Fort Monroe; and

WHEREAS, the Fort Monroe Authority acknowledges the goals expressed by the Citizens for a Fort

Monroe National Park and other interested parties; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the General Assembly commend the Fort Monroe Authority, Citizens for a Fort Monroe National Park, Hampton City Council, Governor of Virginia, Virginia Department of Historic Resources, Preservation Virginia, and the National Park Service for their work in establishing the Fort Monroe National Monument; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the General Assembly commend the Citizens for a Fort Monroe National Park and other interested parties' advocacy for preserving viewsheds to the maximum extent possible in the Wherry Quarter, the permanent and substantial connection of the bifurcated National Park Service parcels, the maintenance of Batteries Parrott and Irwin and connecting land to Wherry Quarter for eventual inclusion in the National Park Service property, and the discouragement of development between the bifurcated National Park Service parcels on any land designated as public open space in the Master Plan for Fort Monroe; and, be it

RESOLVED FINALLY, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare copies of this resolution for presentation to the Fort Monroe Authority, Citizens for a Fort Monroe National Park, Hampton City Council, Governor of Virginia, Virginia Department of Historic Resources, Preservation Virginia, and the National Park Service as an expression of the General Assembly's admiration for their work to establish a monument on one of the Commonwealth's historic sites.