

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 216

Commending Washington Dulles International Airport.

Agreed to by the Senate, March 7, 2012
Agreed to by the House of Delegates, March 8, 2012

WHEREAS, on November 17, 2012, Washington Dulles International Airport will recognize its 50th anniversary in service to passengers from the Commonwealth of Virginia, the national capital region, and the world; and

WHEREAS, the United States Congress passed the Second Washington Airport Act on September 7, 1950, and, while appropriating money in August of 1957, requested first the selection of a site by President Dwight D. Eisenhower; and

WHEREAS, in January 1958, President Eisenhower sent to Congress the recommendation of Chantilly, Virginia, and more specifically the Village of Willard, named after Joseph Edward Willard, Fairfax County Delegate to the Virginia General Assembly from 1893 to 1901, as the site; within the month, the acquisition of 10,000 acres began, and on September 2, 1958, construction began in earnest; and

WHEREAS, in May 1958, the engineering firm of Ammann and Whitney of New York was selected by the Civil Aeronautics Administration as the prime contractor for the planning, design, and construction supervision of the airport; other firms associated with the Ammann and Whitney team included Eero Saarinen and Associates of Hamden, Connecticut, architect for the design of the terminal building, control tower, and service buildings; Burns and McDonnell of Kansas City, for the design of the mechanical, electrical, and utility installations; and Ellery Husted of Washington, D.C., as the master planning consultant; and

WHEREAS, Finnish-born architect Eero Saarinen wanted to create something more than just another airport—he wanted to find "the soul of the airport"; he designed the terminal building and the control tower in that spirit, and called the airport "the best thing I have ever done"—the terminal building was selected for a First Honor Award by the American Institute of Architects in 1966; and

WHEREAS, on July 15, 1959, on the recommendation of his special adviser on aviation, retired Lt. General Elwood R. "Pete" Quesada, President Dwight D. Eisenhower used Executive Order 10828 to designate the airport, then known as the Chantilly International Airport, under construction in the Counties of Fairfax and Loudoun in the Commonwealth of Virginia, as Dulles International Airport after his Secretary of State John Foster Dulles, who had died in May 1959; and

WHEREAS, President John F. Kennedy formally dedicated Dulles International Airport on November 17, 1962, at a ceremony attended by former President Dwight D. Eisenhower, members of the Dulles family, many dignitaries, and thousands of spectators; the new airport was a symbol of America's stature and progress as the first United States airport designed for the jet age and an impressive gateway to the nation's capital and the region; and

WHEREAS, from the airport's grand opening on November 17, 1962, through the end of 1962, Dulles International Airport served 52,846 passengers; annual passenger traffic reached one million in 1966 and 10 million in 1987, and in 2012 is estimated to serve more than 23 million passengers, with daily operation of 420 flights, including flights to 49 international destinations; and

WHEREAS, on October 19, 1984, the official name of Dulles International Airport was changed to Washington Dulles International Airport; and

WHEREAS, the federal government, through the Federal Aviation Administration and its predecessors, operated Dulles International Airport from its opening in 1962 until June 7, 1987, when the airport's operation was transferred to the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority under a 50-year lease authorized by the Metropolitan Washington Airports Act of 1986; and

WHEREAS, on September 5, 1996, the Eero Saarinen terminal building expansion was dedicated; the project expanded the terminal building from its initial length of 600 feet by 320 feet on either end bringing the total length to 1,240 feet, containing 1.1 million square feet, as originally envisioned; and

WHEREAS, since the transfer to the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority, additional significant capital improvements have been made to Washington Dulles International Airport under the Dulles Development (D2) Program, including a new airport traffic control tower, two parking garages, expansion of the B-gates, new security screening mezzanines, a new runway, the new AeroTrain system, and an expanded international arrivals building—all to enable growth of the airport and enhance air service to the region; and

WHEREAS, Washington Dulles International Airport has been a dynamic catalyst for economic development and business creation in the region and the Commonwealth of Virginia; and

WHEREAS, the total 2010 statewide economic benefit from Washington Dulles International Airport includes 96,980 jobs and \$10.123 billion in economic activity in the Commonwealth of Virginia, according to the 2011 Virginia Airport System Economic Impact Study prepared for the Virginia Department of Aviation; and

WHEREAS, during the course of Washington Dulles International Airport's 50 years of service, the airport will have provided service to over one-half billion passengers; and

WHEREAS, the first 50 years of Washington Dulles International Airport's distinguished service has established a solid foundation for future development of the airport, ongoing development of the airport's critical role in the national and regional transportation system, and the enhancement to its facilities and services needed for the next 50 years of aviation service to the Commonwealth of Virginia, the national capital region, and the world; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commend Washington Dulles International Airport on the occasion of its 50th anniversary; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority as an expression of the General Assembly's congratulations and appreciation for Washington Dulles International Airport's contributions to Northern Virginia and the Commonwealth, the airport's commitment to outstanding service, and best wishes for the future.