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SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 231

Offered March 2, 2012

Commending the Alexandria Library on the occasion of its 75th anniversary as a public library.

Patrons—Ebbin, Barker and Saslaw; Delegates: Englin and Herring

WHEREAS, the Alexandria Library Company was founded on July 24, 1794, at the home of local resident John Wise; and

WHEREAS, on January 9, 1799, the Alexandria Library Company was chartered by the General Assembly of Virginia; and

WHEREAS, the Company's first address is thought to have been Mr. Stabler's Apothecary Shop on Fairfax Street, and it was later headquartered in other locations, including the old City Hall and the Lyceum; and

WHEREAS, the Library Company's rare book collection was begun in 1822 with *The Gardener's Dictionary*, which had been presented to a city resident by General George Washington; and

WHEREAS, through a century and a quarter, the Library Company flourished as a subscription library, with a four dollar annual fee; and

WHEREAS, in 1937, Dr. Robert South Barrett donated funds to erect a public library in memory of his mother, Dr. Kate Waller Barrett, an Alexandria physician who worked to provide shelter and services for unwed mothers; and

WHEREAS, the Alexandria Society of Friends granted a 99-year lease for use of its old Quaker Burial Ground on Queen Street in Old Town as a site for the new library; and

WHEREAS, the Library Company signed an agreement with the Alexandria City Council turning over its collections to the city, and the city agreed to include operating expenses for the public library in its annual budget; and

WHEREAS, the Kate Waller Barrett Library was the first public library in Alexandria; and

WHEREAS, the Kate Waller Barrett branch was followed by the Robert H. Robinson branch library, founded to serve Alexandria's black residents and later integrated into the Alexandria library system; and

WHEREAS, the Alexandria Library has expanded over the years and now includes the Kate Waller Barrett Branch Library, the Charles E. Beatley, Jr., Central Library, the James M. Duncan, Jr., Branch Library, and the Ellen Coolidge Burke Branch Library, as well as virtual access by way of the library system's website; and

WHEREAS, in 2011, the Alexandria Library had 140,000 library cardholders who checked out 1.1 million items; 900,000 patrons who visited the four branches; and over 250,000 people who visited its website; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commend the Alexandria Library on the occasion of its 75th anniversary as a public library; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the Alexandria Library as an expression of the General Assembly's congratulations and admiration for its many years of providing a valuable service to the citizens of Alexandria.

INTRODUCED

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