

2012 SESSION

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SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 77

Offered January 11, 2012

Prefiled January 11, 2012

Commending the Coastal Virginia Wildlife Observatory.

Patron—Northam

WHEREAS, the Coastal Virginia Wildlife Observatory works to protect wildlife through field research, education, and habitat conservation; and

WHEREAS, the genesis for the wildlife observatory was in 1963 when volunteers began an annual songbird banding program at Kiptopeke; in 1994 a committed and dedicated group of wildlife conservationists formed the Coastal Virginia Wildlife Observatory to continue the volunteers' work; and

WHEREAS, the Coastal Virginia Wildlife Observatory recognizes the great importance of migratory birds and their critical habitats in the Commonwealth; and

WHEREAS, the Coastal Virginia Wildlife Observatory helps protect songbirds, raptors, butterflies, and other species that use the great migration routes over Virginia; the organization's Kiptopeke observation station is in an area that is globally significant for migrating birds; and

WHEREAS, the Coastal Virginia Wildlife Observatory has programs on the Eastern Shore, in Virginia Beach, Chesapeake, and in other areas of the state, with volunteers playing a crucial role in the observatory's research and conservation mission; and

WHEREAS, some of the critical habitats for migratory birds can be found in Virginia, and research about migratory birds conducted by the Coastal Virginia Wildlife Observatory is unique and important to conservation efforts; and

WHEREAS, the Coastal Virginia Wildlife Observatory offers programs for nature lovers and birdwatchers that bring individuals to the Commonwealth to participate in hawk watching, an annual butterfly count, songbird banding, hawk banding, and a Christmas bird count, contributing to tourism in Virginia; and

WHEREAS, the Kiptopeke fall hawk-watch program, conducted by the Coastal Virginia Wildlife Observatory, is the best place in the world to see migrating Merlin falcons and peregrine falcons; since 1977 more than 750,000 hawk and vulture sightings have been recorded there; and

WHEREAS, the Coastal Virginia Wildlife Observatory's songbird banding program at Kiptopeke recorded more than 10,000 birds in 2011, representing 99 species, including warblers, woodpeckers, cardinals, sparrows, and gray catbirds; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commend the Coastal Virginia Wildlife Observatory on its celebration of 50 years of working to protect wildlife; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the Coastal Virginia Wildlife Observatory as an expression of the General Assembly's admiration for the organization's unceasing efforts to protect a vital part of Virginia's natural heritage.

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