

2012 SPECIAL SESSION I

ENROLLED

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 510

Commending First Mount Zion Baptist Church.

Agreed to by the Senate, April 17, 2012

WHEREAS, First Mount Zion Baptist Church of Dumfries will proudly celebrate its 145th anniversary in 2012 with the theme of "Honoring the Past...Continuing the Vision"; and

WHEREAS, in 1867, a group of approximately 30 newly freed slaves banded together to start a church, Mount Zion Baptist Church, where they could worship in freedom; and

WHEREAS, those first members purchased land for \$10 in Stafford County's Rock Hill Magisterial District and built a log cabin church that served members until it burned in 1873; and

WHEREAS, following the fire, the congregation of Mount Zion Baptist Church divided into two separate congregations with the present-day First Mount Zion Baptist Church relocating to what is now part of Marine Corps Base Quantico; and

WHEREAS, First Mount Zion Baptist Church relocated from the Marine Corps Base Quantico location when the base expanded in the mid-1940s to its present-day location where new churches were built in 1947 and 1981; and

WHEREAS, members of First Mount Zion Baptist Church grew in faith and numbers over the years, initially meeting once a month, then twice a month, before Reverend Augustus Thomas Gaskins became pastor in 1962 and began holding weekly services in 1965; and

WHEREAS, Reverend Gaskins served the congregation of First Mount Zion Baptist Church with great faithfulness for 33 years, becoming pastor emeritus when he retired in 1995; and

WHEREAS, in 1995, the Reverend Dr. Luke E. Torian became First Mount Zion Baptist Church's first fulltime pastor; his vision has led the church as it has grown to a membership of over 4,000 and significantly expanded its ministries to members and the community; and

WHEREAS, today, First Mount Zion Baptist Church offers a Music and Fine Arts Ministry, Youth Ministry, Grain of Heaven Food Services ministry, Fit by God Fitness Center ministry, Christian Education ministries, and a host of other ministries to edify, instruct, and uplift members and the community; and

WHEREAS, First Mount Zion Baptist Church takes great pride in its accomplishments and rich history of service and looks forward to continuing to fulfill its mission in the future; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate of Virginia, That First Mount Zion Baptist Church hereby be commended on the occasion of its 145th anniversary; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to First Mount Zion Baptist Church as an expression of the Senate of Virginia's congratulations and admiration for the church's 145 years of faithful service to its members and the community.

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