

## 2013 SESSION

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### HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 544

Offered January 9, 2013  
Prefiled October 17, 2012

*Commending Smithfield Little Theatre.*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Patron—Morris

WHEREAS, for 50 years, Smithfield Little Theatre has brought local residents together to enjoy performances that have ranged from musicals to drama to comedy; and

WHEREAS, in August of 1962, Smithfield Little Theatre opened its doors under the leadership of president Ellie Dashiell and with actors from the children's theatre at the Smithfield Recreation Association; and

WHEREAS, Smithfield Little Theatre entertained its first audience with a performance of The Cat and the Canary at the old Smithfield High School, now the Smithfield branch of the Blackwater Library; and

WHEREAS, four years later, Smithfield Little Theatre moved to the Smithfield Community Hall and later to the old cotton gin warehouse, which underwent renovations to create a carpeted lobby, a full stage, and the addition of refurbished seats from a movie theater; and

WHEREAS, Smithfield Little Theatre leased the historic cotton gin warehouse for \$1 a year from Howard W. Gwaltney of ITT Gwaltney before ITT Gwaltney donated the building to the organization in 1973; and

WHEREAS, in 2001 Smithfield Little Theatre moved into a beautiful new building at The Smithfield Center on land that had been donated by Smithfield Foods and Joe Luter and performed 1776 as its first production in its new venue; and

WHEREAS, over the years, Smithfield Little Theatre audiences have seen outstanding performances of L'il Abner, Guys & Dolls, Barefoot in the Park, A Streetcar Named Desire, Brigadoon, South Pacific, and a host of others; and

WHEREAS, on June 3, 2012, current and former performers, participants, and patrons gathered to view short 15-minute performances, memorabilia, videos of past performances, and theatre performers in costumes from the past as well as tour the Smithfield Little Theatre in celebration of its 50th anniversary; and

WHEREAS, today, Smithfield Little Theatre boasts 1,500 season ticketholders and puts on sell-out shows with its 2012 - 2013 season featuring The Sting, A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum, and Oliver!; and

WHEREAS, from its early days with sets built offsite and prompters to its present-day location with state-of-the-art lighting and accessibility features, Smithfield Little Theatre has been a welcome addition to the community as it has provided an array of productions; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commend Smithfield Little Theatre for enriching the lives of local residents on the occasion of its 50th anniversary; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to Smithfield Little Theatre as an expression of the General Assembly's congratulations and appreciation for the Theatre's contributions to the arts.

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