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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 766

Offered January 22, 2013

Commending Adele Lebowitz.

Patron—Comstock

WHEREAS, Adele Lebowitz of Fairfax, the widow of pioneering businessman and civic leader Mortimer C. Lebowitz, has thoughtfully ensured that all local children have a place to play and learn through the donation of the family estate to the Fairfax County Park Authority; and

WHEREAS, the generous donation of Adele Lebowitz, made in 2000, established Clemyjontri Park, named after the children of Adele and Mortimer Lebowitz—Caroline (Cl), Emily (emy), John (jon), and Petrina (tri), and came with the proviso that the park be made accessible to disabled children; and

WHEREAS, today, Clemyjontri Park, with its specialized equipment, welcomes children of all abilities who use wheelchairs, walkers, or braces, or who have sensory or developmental disabilities to enjoy the playground experience; and

WHEREAS, Clemyjontri Park offers lowered monkey bars, rubber flooring instead of mulch, a drag strip for wheelchairs and walkers, quiet space for autistic children, and auditory and tactile features for the visually and hearing impaired; and

WHEREAS, the donation of the land for Clemyjontri Park is in keeping with the Lebowitz family's strong tradition of civic engagement as evidenced by the life of Adele Lebowitz' husband, Mortimer, the founder of Morton's Discount Department Store chain; and

WHEREAS, Mortimer Lebowitz opened his first store at Seventh and D Streets in Washington, D.C., during the Great Depression with the help of his father, Henry Lebowitz, and from the first store's opening, he defied racial segregation; and

WHEREAS, Mortimer Lebowitz offered integrated facilities for black and white customers and not only had African American employees and managers, but paid them the same wages as their white counterparts; and

WHEREAS, throughout the 1950s and 1960s, Mortimer Lebowitz opened stores throughout impoverished areas of Washington, D.C., and served as the president of the Urban League and marched with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., in Montgomery, Alabama; and

WHEREAS, a man of great integrity and compassion, Mortimer Lebowitz staunchly supported the Jewish community and served as chair of the Washington Committee for the Rebuilding of the Hebrew University in Jerusalem; and

WHEREAS, throughout their marriage, Adele and Mortimer Lebowitz shared a strong commitment to their community and family; and

WHEREAS, the donation of the family estate for the creation of an innovative and inclusive park continues the Lebowitz family tradition of supporting and bringing together all members of the community; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commend Adele Lebowitz, the widow of Mortimer C. Lebowitz, on her civic spirit as demonstrated through the donation of the family estate to the Fairfax County Park Authority for the establishment of Clemyjontri Park; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to Adele Lebowitz as an expression of the General Assembly's admiration for her commitment to the children of Fairfax County.

INTRODUCED

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