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SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 298

Offered January 9, 2013

Prefiled January 7, 2013

Commending the City of Virginia Beach.

Patron—McWaters

WHEREAS, the City of Virginia Beach, the most populous in the Commonwealth with approximately 441,000 residents, will celebrate the 50th anniversary of its formation in 2013; and

WHEREAS, on April 26, 1607, the colonists landed at Cape Henry and erected a cross at "First Landing"; and

WHEREAS, Cape Henry Lighthouse, the first lighthouse authorized by the newly formed United States government, was completed in 1792; and

WHEREAS, in 1888, residents and visitors first promenaded along the famed Oceanfront Boardwalk, which was originally built from wooden planks; and

WHEREAS, in 1952, the City of Virginia Beach became politically independent from Princess Anne County, and in 1963, the City of Virginia Beach and Princess Anne County were consolidated; and

WHEREAS, in 1995, the City of Virginia Beach enacted the Agricultural Lands Preservation Ordinance and the Virginia Beach Agriculture Reserve Program to conserve and protect its natural resources; and

WHEREAS, today, the City of Virginia Beach, located at the southern end of the largest bridge-tunnel complex in the world—the Chesapeake Bay Bridge-Tunnel, boasts a wide array of services for residents and attracts millions of visitors annually with its many attractions; and

WHEREAS, in 2012, Virginia Beach was named as the one of America's 50 Best Cities by *Bloomberg Businessweek* and as the Best-Run City in America by *24/7 Wall Street Journal*; and

WHEREAS, the City of Virginia Beach, with a population of more than 400,000, has the largest volunteer-based emergency management service system in the United States and a public school system ranked as the fifth best large city school division in the nation, according to GreatSchools; and

WHEREAS, named one of the nation's Top 10 Best Walking Cities by *Prevention* magazine, Virginia Beach is also home to Grommet Island Park, a 15,000-square-foot, handicapped-accessible play area on the beach, the first of its kind in America; and

WHEREAS, Virginia Beach, the home of five major military installations and the Tidewater Veterans Memorial, was the recipient of the Association of Defense Communities Active Base Community of the Year Award in 2010; and

WHEREAS, in 2013, the largest joint-use library in the Commonwealth, a partnership between Tidewater Community College and the City of Virginia Beach, will open to provide residents with greater services; and

WHEREAS, Virginia Beach is home to the Commonwealth's third-most visited attraction, the Virginia Aquarium and Marine Science Center, and the Commonwealth's tallest building—the 38-story Westin Hotel and Residences; and

WHEREAS, visitors and residents to Virginia Beach enjoy a wide range of performances at the Sandler Center for the Performing Arts; and

WHEREAS, Virginia Beach, rated a four-star beach by the National Resources Defense Council, attracts millions of visitors annually who enjoy the scenic beauty of the ocean and associated recreational activities, including the Coastal Edge East Coast Surfing Championships; and

WHEREAS, a vibrant city, Virginia Beach proudly celebrates the accomplishments of the past 50 years and looks forward to continuing its proud tradition of sound governance, innovative thinking, and commitment to service; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commend the City of Virginia Beach on the occasion of its 50th anniversary; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to William D. Sessoms, Jr., mayor of the City of Virginia Beach, as an expression of the General Assembly's congratulations and appreciation of the City's many contributions to the Commonwealth.

INTRODUCED

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