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SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 420

Offered February 15, 2013

Commending the YMCA of Arlington.

Patrons—Favola, Ebbin and Howell; Delegates: Brink, Hope, Krupicka and Lopez

Referred to Committee on Rules

WHEREAS, the YMCA of Arlington has helped provide valuable learning opportunities to students as a loyal participant in the Virginia YMCA Model General Assembly program; and

WHEREAS, started in 1948, the Virginia YMCA Model General Assembly program (MGA) allows high school students to gain firsthand insights into the legislative process by drafting and debating pieces of mock legislation; and

WHEREAS, over the past 65 years, over 50,000 participants in the MGA have traveled to Richmond and taken on the roles of senators, delegates, reporters, lobbyists, and officers; and

WHEREAS, partnering with the Governor's Career and Technical Academy in the Arlington Career Center, the YMCA of Arlington first participated in the MGA in 2010; the partnership granted underserved students the opportunity to learn more about government; and

WHEREAS, in 2010 and 2011, the YMCA of Arlington sent six students from the Arlington Career Center to the MGA; and

WHEREAS, expanding the program to include students from different backgrounds in 2012, the YMCA of Arlington invited five students from the Arlington Career Center and six from Yorktown High School; and

WHEREAS, the YMCA of Arlington plans to invite students from the Arlington Career Center, Yorktown High School, and at least one additional school to the 2013 MGA session; and

WHEREAS, students enter a training program in the fall to prepare for the MGA session, which occurs after the completion of the Virginia General Assembly session; and

WHEREAS, with the assistance of current members of the General Assembly, students research and select bills, learn about the rules and responsibilities of the General Assembly, and practice debate techniques and public speaking; and

WHEREAS, during the 2012 MGA session, the YMCA of Arlington team brought two bills, both related to current issues, up for debate; and

WHEREAS, one of the bills, introduced by Benjamin Barsky of Yorktown High School, was passed and signed into law, marking the first time that the YMCA of Arlington team had successfully guided a bill through the entire process; and

WHEREAS, several Yorktown High School students were named as officers for the 2013 session, including Ellie McDonald as president pro tempore of the senate, Maddie Moran as sergeant-at-arms, and Aisha Farooq as deputy clerk; and

WHEREAS, the MGA helps students build confidence, develop leadership skills, appreciate new viewpoints, and gain valuable experience into the inner workings of the Commonwealth; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commend the YMCA of Arlington for participating in the Virginia YMCA Model General Assembly program; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the YMCA of Arlington as an expression of the General Assembly's admiration for the club's dedication to providing learning opportunities for students in Arlington County.

INTRODUCED

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