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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 226

Offered January 27, 2014

Commending Senior Connections, The Capital Area Agency on Aging on its 40th anniversary.

Patrons—Carr, Brink, James, McClellan, McQuinn and Tyler

WHEREAS, a demographic shift is being driven by America's aging baby boomers, and, according to the Bureau of the Census, over the next 15 years, more than 72 million Americans will be 65 years of age or older; and

WHEREAS, in an article by Tammie Smith entitled "Leading voice for Vintage Virginians," it was reported that "in Virginia in 2030, the population of seniors 65 and older is projected to be almost 1.8 million, and by 2038, the 65-and-older population is expected to outnumber the population of persons 18 and younger"; and

WHEREAS, by 2030, the population of older adults in Virginia Planning District 15 will double to almost 400,000; and

WHEREAS, the demographic shift to a population largely composed of working-age persons and racial and ethnic minorities is prompting reconsideration of priorities by many communities, such as senior services, additional preschool openings, replacement of public schools, and transportation services; and

WHEREAS, to ensure the well-being, health, and safety of Virginia's seniors, the Virginia Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services provides a network of support services through 25 Area Agencies on Aging and a corps of volunteers; and

WHEREAS, one of the most effective leaders and dedicated advocates for senior citizens in the Commonwealth is Thelma Bland Watson, former commissioner of the then-Virginia Department for the Aging and current Executive Director of Senior Connections, The Capital Area Agency on Aging, which offers a comprehensive range of home and community-based services for seniors aged 55 and older, caregivers, and persons with disabilities in the City of Richmond and the Counties of Charles City, Chesterfield, Goochland, Hanover, Henrico, New Kent, and Powhatan; and

WHEREAS, under the leadership of Thelma Bland Watson, Senior Connections provides money management, caregiver support, and insurance counseling to help Medicare beneficiaries sort through complicated choices; and Senior Connections also helps senior citizens maintain a quality of life and independence as they age by placing special emphasis on frail and disadvantaged elderly, who may be socially isolated and physically or economically at risk; and

WHEREAS, in addition, Senior Connections also advocates for and educates senior citizens and future retirees concerning issues that affect them through a coordinated Age Wave Coalition with local partners, such as the Department of Gerontology at Virginia Commonwealth University, the Richmond Regional Planning District Commission, and the United Way of Greater Richmond and Petersburg; and

WHEREAS, for 40 years, Senior Connections, The Capital Area Agency on Aging has rendered invaluable services to Virginia's senior citizens, caregivers, and future retirees, ensuring that they maintain quality of life and independence as they age; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commend Senior Connections, The Capital Area Agency on Aging on the occasion of its 40th anniversary; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to Thelma Bland Watson, Executive Director of Senior Connections, The Capital Area Agency on Aging, as an expression of the General Assembly's appreciation for its service to senior citizens, caregivers, and future retirees in the Commonwealth.

INTRODUCED

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