

2014 SESSION

ENROLLED

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 298

Commending the Bedford Area Chamber of Commerce.

Agreed to by the House of Delegates, February 14, 2014
Agreed to by the Senate, February 20, 2014

WHEREAS, in the late 1920s, business leaders in Bedford County began to work together as an advocacy group to promote business and industry in the county, and on May 8, 1925, the Bedford Board of Trade voted to change its name to Bedford Chamber of Commerce, which was incorporated in October 1939; and

WHEREAS, in 1939, according to the history of the Bedford Area Chamber of Commerce related by three of its surviving founders, "horse-drawn carriages had not entirely surrendered the streets to trucks and automobiles, but a more modern era was emerging as evidenced by television's debut at the 1939 World's Fair; it was also the year that *Gone With the Wind* debuted in movie theaters across the country, and with grocery, drug, variety, clothing, and furniture stores, a gas station, car dealerships, doctors, dentists, hotels, theaters, a bowling alley, and pool hall, Bedford was fairly self-sufficient"; and

WHEREAS, in September 1941, the Bedford Chamber of Commerce merged with the Commercial Association of Bedford County, and during the 1960s, the Bedford Chamber of Commerce was renamed Bedford County Chamber of Commerce and assisted in attracting a \$2.5 million oil distribution terminal to Montvale and developing the Peaks of Otter Lodge and Restaurant; and

WHEREAS, in January 1986, the Bedford County Chamber of Commerce was renamed Bedford Chamber of Commerce, and with the Chamber's growth to 388 members, the Bedford Chamber of Commerce changed its name again to the Bedford Area Chamber of Commerce in 1990; and

WHEREAS, the Bedford Area Chamber of Commerce has been a leading champion for business in the region and has focused on creating a climate of growth and success in the community; and

WHEREAS, the Bedford Area Chamber of Commerce provides leadership and volunteer programs, networking opportunities, and initiatives that facilitate the formation of business critical to the economic vitality, productivity, and quality of life of the community; and

WHEREAS, by leveraging the support, talent, resources, and commitment of the members of the Bedford Area Chamber of Commerce to develop new and more effective methods of networking among businesses beyond the city and county, numerous business endeavors have been created, including "Networking Before Nine" and "Business After Hours"; many committees and task forces related to government affairs, transportation, workforce development, and technology have been established; special events have taken place, such as "ChocolateFest," "Beach Bash," "Annual Dinner and Bedford Business Expo," and the "Leadership Bedford" program; and lead groups have formed in the Bedford, Forest, and Smith Mountain Lake areas; and

WHEREAS, the Bedford Area Chamber of Commerce has provided remarkable leadership to foster business growth and economic development for more than 75 years in the Bedford County area, and it is appropriate and fitting to commend the Chamber's achievements; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commend the Bedford Area Chamber of Commerce on the occasion of its 75th anniversary; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to President and Chief Executive Officer Susan Martin of the Bedford Area Chamber of Commerce, as an expression of the General Assembly's appreciation for its service to the citizens of Bedford County and best wishes for future success.

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