

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 426

Commending the Thoroughbred Retirement Foundation at James River.

Agreed to by the House of Delegates, March 5, 2014

Agreed to by the Senate, March 7, 2014

WHEREAS, the Thoroughbred Retirement Foundation, a nonprofit charitable organization, is the largest equine sanctuary in the world devoted to the rescue, retirement, rehabilitation, and retraining of thoroughbred horses no longer able to compete on the racetrack; and

WHEREAS, the Thoroughbred Retirement Foundation operates the Second Chances Program at correctional facilities in 10 states, a program where inmates build life skills while participating in vocational training involving supervised care of ex-racehorses; and

WHEREAS, in 2007, the Virginia Department of Corrections (VADOC) entered into a public-private partnership with the Thoroughbred Retirement Foundation; and

WHEREAS, since 2007, the Thoroughbred Retirement Foundation at James River (TRF at James River) and VADOC have jointly operated the Second Chances Program at James River Work Center to rehabilitate nonviolent offenders by training them in equine management using ex-racehorses; and

WHEREAS, the TRF at James River is a volunteer organization that has raised and contributed more than \$500,000 in private funds to fully support this program as well as to help support the more than 950 thoroughbreds in the national herd; and

WHEREAS, one of the graduates of the program, Tamio Holmes, was recognized for his successful transition from prison to society by Governor Robert F. McDonnell in his State of the Commonwealth Address on January 8, 2014; and

WHEREAS, more than 60 men have graduated from the local Second Chances Program since 2008, many of whom have made a similarly successful transition to society, whether by working in the horse industry or pursuing a career in another field; and

WHEREAS, with the help of the program participants, more than 35 horses have been rehabilitated, retrained, and adopted for second careers as trail horses, companion animals, or blue-ribbon-winning performance horses; and

WHEREAS, TRF at James River has drawn media attention from the *Wall Street Journal Magazine*, *ABC News*, the *Washington Post*, the *Voice of America*, *Virginia Currents*, and many local and regional news outlets; and

WHEREAS, TRF at James River owes much of its ongoing success to the dedication of its volunteers and generous donations from local individuals, organizations, and businesses; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commend the Thoroughbred Retirement Foundation at James River for helping nonviolent offenders gain valuable life skills and reenter society and providing a safe haven for thoroughbred horses that can no longer compete; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the Thoroughbred Retirement Foundation at James River as an expression of the General Assembly's admiration for its outstanding service to the Commonwealth.

ENROLLED

HJ426ER