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**HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 129**

Offered February 24, 2014

*Commending the Virginia Commercial Space Flight Authority.*

Patron—Kilgore

WHEREAS, the Virginia Commercial Space Flight Authority has played a crucial role in promoting the importance of manned space flight missions and making the Commonwealth a leader in the growing commercial space flight industry; and

WHEREAS, created in 1995, the Virginia Commercial Space Flight Authority's mission was to promote and facilitate commercial space activity; since 1997, the organization has continually operated and expanded the Mid-Atlantic Regional Spaceport (MARS) at the National Aeronautics and Space Administration's Wallops Flight Facility on Wallops Island; and

WHEREAS, the Virginia Commercial Space Flight Authority has been a positive force on the Eastern Shore, spurring job growth and technological and scientific innovation; the organization also works to prepare the youth of the Commonwealth for the future by promoting science, technology, engineering, and mathematics education; and

WHEREAS, fully licensed by the Federal Aviation Administration and backed by a legacy of over 16,000 rocket launches from NASA's Wallops Flight Facility, the Virginia Commercial Space Flight Authority offers cost-effective, reliable launch services, making MARS the premier launch facility on the East Coast; and

WHEREAS, today, the Virginia Commercial Space Flight Authority is charged with the governance of launchpad facilities at the MARS facility, from which a variety of payloads can be placed into orbit, including human crews; and

WHEREAS, a prominent aerospace company that has already launched two prototype expandable habitats into orbit, with a third module in development, has publicly expressed a desire to conduct manned missions from the MARS facility and is working with the Virginia Commercial Space Flight Authority to make this a reality; and

WHEREAS, as demand continues to grow for launch missions to reach the commercial opportunities in low earth orbit and on the lunar surface, the Virginia Commercial Space Flight Authority is uniquely poised to facilitate these missions for years to come; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, That the Virginia Commercial Space Flight Authority hereby be commended for its role in making the Commonwealth a leader in the growing commercial space flight industry; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the Virginia Commercial Space Flight Authority as an expression of the House of Delegates' admiration for the organization's contributions to the Eastern Shore and the Commonwealth.