

2014 SESSION

ENROLLED

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 185

Commending the Agudas Achim Congregation.

Agreed to by the Senate, March 5, 2014
Agreed to by the House of Delegates, March 6, 2014

WHEREAS, the Agudas Achim Congregation was founded in Alexandria and has served as a pillar of Northern Virginia's Jewish community for the past century; and

WHEREAS, Alexandria's Jewish community was founded in the 1850s by German-Jewish merchants, who settled along King Street and the adjacent neighborhoods; and

WHEREAS, Jews fleeing Czarist Russia first arrived in the cities of Baltimore and Washington before finding a permanent home in Alexandria at the turn of the 20th century; and

WHEREAS, these early settlers sought to preserve their Orthodox traditions by establishing the Agudas Achim Congregation in 1914 at Sarepta Hall on King Street; and

WHEREAS, Agudas Achim congregants have played a vibrant role in the civic and political life of Northern Virginia while also leading numerous charitable and humanitarian initiatives over the years; and

WHEREAS, during World War I, Agudas Achim held fund drives to assist soldiers stationed at Camp Humphreys (now Fort Belvoir) and later loaned one of its Torah scrolls to Marine Corps Base Quantico during World War II; and

WHEREAS, Agudas Achim has welcomed and supported active duty service members as congregants while they were stationed in Northern Virginia; and

WHEREAS, the Congregation helped lay the foundation for Jewish education in Northern Virginia by establishing day camps for children in the 1960s and 1970s, cofounding the Keshet Preschool with the Beth El Congregation and initiating Geshet Jewish Day School; and

WHEREAS, congregants were instrumental in organizing and later leading the Jewish Community Center of Northern Virginia; and

WHEREAS, Agudas Achim took an active role in freeing Jews from the Soviet Union during the 1970s and 1980s by holding daily vigils at the Soviet embassy, providing funding, and sending letters of encouragement; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commend and congratulate the Agudas Achim Congregation on the occasion of its 100th anniversary for its remarkable legacy within Northern Virginia's rich history and its ongoing contributions to the community; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the Agudas Achim Congregation as an expression of the General Assembly's appreciation and admiration for the Congregation's exemplary service to the City of Alexandria, the Commonwealth, and people of all faiths.

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