

## 2014 SESSION

ENROLLED

### SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 51

*Commending Oakland Baptist Church.*

Agreed to by the Senate, March 5, 2014

WHEREAS, in 2014, Oakland Baptist Church celebrates 300 years of supporting and uplifting the members of the Prince George County community; and

WHEREAS, tracing its deepest roots to the first settlers in Virginia, Oakland Baptist Church was founded in approximately 1714 by Robert Norden of England, who served as pastor until 1725; and

WHEREAS, a Baptist meeting house originally known as Davenports was built on land donated by Sallie Davenport, and by 1727, the congregation had about 40 members; Davenports was the only Baptist church in the area for many years; and

WHEREAS, in 1838, the church was reorganized by Lucy Tucker and renamed Old Shop, as services were held in a cooper's shop; during the Civil War, Old Shop was used by the Union Army as a hospital; and

WHEREAS, during World War I, a group of Czech-Slovak Baptists settled in Prince George County; led by Andrew Sluka, the group began to worship together in the Old Shop church and later renamed it Czech-Slovak Oakland Baptist Church after receiving the deed as a gift; and

WHEREAS, Czech-Slovak Oakland Baptist Church immediately began to conduct missionary work in the community and was accepted into the Petersburg Baptist Association of the Southern Baptist Convention in 1929; and

WHEREAS, originally, services at Czech-Slovak Oakland Baptist Church were conducted in both Czech and English; during the 1950s, the church began to conduct all services and most Sunday School classes in the English language, and the name was changed to Oakland Baptist Church; and

WHEREAS, to accommodate growing Sunday School classes, Oakland Baptist Church built an educational building in 1969; the building was expanded in 2004; and

WHEREAS, in recent years, Oakland Baptist Church has continued to grow; the church now offers two services from a new 350-seat sanctuary, which was dedicated on January 23, 2011; in 2014, the church welcomed an average of 200 parishioners and a large television audience at morning services; and

WHEREAS, Oakland Baptist Church has enjoyed a rich tradition of missionary work and continues to support missions locally and around the world; members of the church have served in North America, Central America, South America, Europe, Africa, and Asia; and

WHEREAS, Oakland Baptist Church consistently ranks among the top five Baptist churches in the Commonwealth for mission giving, and in 2013, the church was ranked by the Virginia Baptist Mission Board as number one in mission giving for the Petersburg Baptist Association; and

WHEREAS, for 300 years, Oakland Baptist Church has succeeded in its mission to provide community outreach and offer a joyful place for the residents of Prince George County to enjoy fellowship and worship; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate of Virginia, That Oakland Baptist Church, one of the oldest Baptist churches in the Commonwealth, hereby be commended on the occasion of its 300th anniversary; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to Oakland Baptist Church as an expression of the Senate of Virginia's admiration for the church's storied history and contributions to the community.

ENROLLED

SR51ER