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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 5109

Offered June 11, 2014

Commending the Virginia School for the Deaf and the Blind.

Patron—Bell, Richard P.

WHEREAS, the Virginia School for the Deaf and the Blind celebrates its 175th anniversary in 2014; one of the oldest schools in the Commonwealth, and the second school of its kind in the United States, it was established by an act of the Virginia General Assembly on March 31, 1838, and the first student arrived on November 30, 1839; and

WHEREAS, the Virginia School for the Deaf and the Blind (VSDB) served the Commonwealth as the only school for deaf and blind children until 1909, and it continues to serve deaf, blind, and deafblind children to this day; and

WHEREAS, the VSDB campus was surrendered to the Confederate States for use as a military hospital on July 19, 1861, and in August 1864, Union forces took possession of the campus and continued to use it as a hospital until May 1865; and

WHEREAS, the two state schools serving deaf, blind, deafblind, and sensory-impaired, multiple-handicapped children were consolidated on the VSDB Staunton campus by the General Assembly in 2008; and

WHEREAS, as a result of the consolidation of the two schools, the Commonwealth renovated existing facilities and built a new, state-of-the-art facility, which was completed in 2012, to ensure a high-quality education for all sensory-impaired children; and

WHEREAS, students attending VSDB receive an education based upon their individual needs, with a number of diploma options; the school provides community-based instruction in an atmosphere that fosters independence with peers and provides opportunities for students to compete in academic and sports programs with other schools for the deaf and the blind; and

WHEREAS, VSDB offers a program that provides information, education, and support services to families with children from birth to three years old who are deaf, blind, or deafblind; and

WHEREAS, VSDB also provides a summer program and short-term programs during the school year to students attending other schools; and

WHEREAS, upon graduation, VSDB students are connected with outside agencies from which they may receive further training and educational opportunities; and

WHEREAS, VSDB partners with local businesses, nonprofit organizations, and private entities in an effort to offer enhanced programs for students; and

WHEREAS, VSDB collaborates with state universities' licensing programs to provide opportunities for college practicum and internships; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commend the Virginia School for the Deaf and the Blind on the occasion of its 175th anniversary; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to Nancy C. Armstrong, superintendent of the Virginia School for the Deaf and the Blind, as an expression of the General Assembly's congratulations and admiration for the school's 175 years of continuous service to the Commonwealth and its mission to develop citizen leaders who are prepared to make positive contributions to the common good of society.

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