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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 777

Offered February 6, 2015

Celebrating the life of Nora Ruth Williamson.

Patrons—Pogge; Senator: Norment

WHEREAS, Nora Ruth Williamson of Seaford, an advocate for children in need in York County as a volunteer, foster parent, and employee of York County government, a longtime member of the Exchange Club of York service organization, and a devoted wife and mother, died on October 3, 2014; and

WHEREAS, Ruth Williamson was born in Newport News and graduated from Warwick High School; she married and raised a family of four children, and in her 50s she returned to school, earning a degree from Thomas Nelson Community College; and

WHEREAS, Ruth Williamson's calling to help underprivileged children began in 1973 as a volunteer in the York County Public Schools system; she took children to medical appointments and also purchased clothing and shoes for less fortunate young people; and

WHEREAS, in 1974, Ruth Williamson became a foster parent for girls in need of emergency placement; she and her husband, Robert, were foster parents to more than 20 teenagers over the years; and

WHEREAS, Ruth Williamson began working for York County government as a volunteer coordinator; she then became director of a community court alternatives program for the county, developing programs to help troubled youths; and

WHEREAS, a belief that creating a caring and structured environment would help young people turn their lives around was a hallmark of Ruth Williamson's efforts to help boys and girls in need in York County; and

WHEREAS, Ruth Williamson also founded a family-oriented group home for foster children; the innovative program supported parents as they worked to maintain custody of their children, and foster parents also were closely involved in the efforts to reunite families; and

WHEREAS, Ruth Williamson started a work-hour community service program to serve as an alternative to incarceration for teenagers, and toward the end of her career, she began working for a group home for boys; and

WHEREAS, in honor of her work with young people, Ruth Williamson was named Volunteer of the Year in 1976 by the Volunteer Action Center, and in 1983, she received the Exchange Club of York's Crime Prevention Award—the first woman and the first non-law-enforcement officer to be so honored; and

WHEREAS, Ruth Williamson enjoyed her involvement with the Exchange Club of York, a local branch of a national service organization; she was the group's first female president; and

WHEREAS, predeceased by her husband, Robert, Ruth Williamson will be greatly missed and fondly remembered by her children, Robby, Kirk, Wendy, and Mark, and their families; her mother, Mary Mahler; and many other family members and friends; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly hereby note with great sadness the loss of Nora Ruth Williamson of Seaford, who was dedicated to helping children in need in York County as a volunteer, foster parent, and employee of York County government, a longtime member of the Exchange Club of York service organization, and a devoted wife and mother; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the family of Nora Ruth Williamson as an expression of the General Assembly's respect for her memory.

INTRODUCED

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