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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 826

Offered February 13, 2015

Commending the City of Virginia Beach Department of Agriculture.

Patrons—Knight, Bloxom, Davis, DeSteph, Lindsey, Stolle, Taylor and Villanueva; Senators: Cosgrove, McWaters and Wagner

WHEREAS, the City of Virginia Beach Department of Agriculture has promoted the importance of agriculture in Virginia Beach and the former Princess Anne County and diligently supported the region's farmers and agribusiness professionals; and

WHEREAS, officially established to serve Princess Anne County under H. W. Ozlin, the City of Virginia Beach Department of Agriculture traces its deepest roots to the farmers who first tended the land in the Virginia colonies and established farming and agriculture as a cornerstone of the Commonwealth's economy; the organization took its current name in 1963 when Virginia Beach and Princess Anne County merged to form the City of Virginia Beach; and

WHEREAS, with more than 29,000 acres of crops, fruits and vegetables, and pastures, agriculture is the third-largest industry in Virginia Beach, representing more than \$100 million in the local economy; the region's diverse agricultural industry accounts for the production of food, clothing, fuel, and other products; and

WHEREAS, the City of Virginia Beach Department of Agriculture provides leadership, coordination, and education to the region's farmers and agriculture agribusiness professionals, works to preserve and enhance the region's resources and environment, and encourages members of the public to take an active role as stewards of the region's agricultural heritage; and

WHEREAS, in 1976, the City of Virginia Beach Department of Agriculture established the Virginia Beach Farmers Market, a year-round market offering fresh, local produce and products that holds 16 annual events and seasonal Friday night hoedowns; and

WHEREAS, in addition to H. W. Ozlin, the City of Virginia Beach Department of Agriculture has benefited from the able leadership of four directors throughout its history, including Dick Cockrell, Louis Cullipher, Jack Whitney, and David Trimmer; and

WHEREAS, to better serve the public, the Virginia Beach Agricultural Advisory Commission was established in 1994 and the Agriculture Reserve Program (ARP) was established in 1995; the ARP has preserved more than 9,000 acres of local farmland through conservation easements to ensure continued access to the region's valuable agricultural resources; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commend the City of Virginia Beach Department of Agriculture for its many years of work to promote, protect, and advance agribusiness in the region; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the City of Virginia Beach Department of Agriculture as an expression of the General Assembly's admiration for its long tradition of service to the community.

INTRODUCED

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