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## HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 836

Offered February 16, 2015

*Commending Bess Pierce, D.V.M.*

Patrons—Yost; Senator: Edwards

WHEREAS, Bess Pierce, D.V.M., an associate professor at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, has been honored with the 2015 Bustad Companion Animal Veterinarian of the Year Award; and

WHEREAS, the Bustad Companion Animal Veterinarian of the Year Award is bestowed by the American Veterinary Medical Association and is the highest honor in the nation for work in the human-animal bond; it recognizes a veterinarian's work to preserve and protect human-animal relationships through practice, community service, teaching, or research; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Pierce works in the Department of Population Health Sciences at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (Virginia Tech); she developed a residency program in small animal community practice with a combined master's degree in human-animal bond studies at the university's Virginia-Maryland College of Veterinary Medicine; and

WHEREAS, the human-animal interface is Dr. Pierce's specialty; she spent more than 15 years on active duty as a veterinarian in the United States Army Veterinary Corps, which is responsible for the veterinary care and conditioning of working dogs in all branches of the military; and

WHEREAS, since joining the faculty of Virginia Tech's veterinary college, Dr. Pierce, who directs the Center for Animal Human Relationships, has promoted programs that study and encourage the human-animal bond; and

WHEREAS, as a member of the veterinary college's Center for Public and Corporate Veterinary Medicine, Dr. Pierce helps prepare students for nontraditional veterinary fields, and she also has helped to establish several therapy dog programs at Virginia Tech; and

WHEREAS, because of Dr. Pierce's efforts, a Labrador retriever named Delaware became the first in-house therapy dog to join the staff of the veterinary college; it is one example of her leadership and philanthropy; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Pierce, who received a bachelor's degree from Tulane University and earned a master's degree and a doctoral degree from Auburn University, continues to serve in the United States Army Reserve and is a colonel assigned to Public Health Command Region - Europe; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Pierce is highly regarded for her knowledge and expertise; she is a member of the board of directors of Saint Francis Service Dogs in Roanoke and is responsible for implementing animal-assisted therapy at Virginia Tech's counseling and women's centers; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commend Bess Pierce, D.V.M., of Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, for receiving the 2015 Bustad Companion Animal Veterinarian of the Year Award from the American Veterinary Medical Association; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to Bess Pierce, D.V.M., as an expression of the General Assembly's respect and admiration for her outstanding service to the Commonwealth and the nation and to companion animals who protect and serve in so many ways.

INTRODUCED

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