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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 33

Offered January 13, 2016

Prefiled December 15, 2015

*Commending the Friends of Falls Church Homeless Shelter.*

Patrons—Simon, Kory, Rasoul and Watts; Senators: Howell, Marsden and Saslaw

WHEREAS, for 20 years the Friends of Falls Church Homeless Shelter has provided temporary shelter and related services to single adults experiencing homelessness in the Falls Church area; and

WHEREAS, the Friends of Falls Church Homeless Shelter, which is on Gordon Road, is a nonprofit organization that began operation in 1996; it features a small-group setting for its residents and relies in large part on the generous help of volunteers; and

WHEREAS, from December 1 through March 31, the Falls Church Homeless Shelter opens its doors to as many as 12 people a night; it keeps two beds—with separate sleeping and shower facilities—reserved for women; and

WHEREAS, each evening volunteers deliver hot meals to the Falls Church Homeless Shelter, most of which are prepared by local families; the senior class at George Mason High School and local restaurants also provide meals, and faith communities stock breakfast items and food staples; and

WHEREAS, the staff of the Falls Church Homeless Shelter offers crisis counseling to guests and provides guidance on additional services that are available; the group also has made arrangements with other organizations to help meet residents' needs during the day; and

WHEREAS, the Friends of Falls Church Homeless Shelter allows guests to reserve a bed for the following night; if the returning guest has not arrived by an established time, then the bed is made available to another person experiencing homelessness; and

WHEREAS, in the last five years, residents stayed at the Falls Church Homeless Shelter for an average of 25 nights; the guests also are encouraged to take part in the shelter's life skills classes and to work with medical professionals who provide flu shots and other assistance; and

WHEREAS, recognizing that guests of the Falls Church Homeless Shelter hope to transition to permanent employment and housing and to greater self-sustainability, the organization contracts with a case manager to work year-round with those who stay at the shelter; and

WHEREAS, the shelter's small size allows residents, volunteers, and service providers to socialize in an easy-going and welcoming atmosphere; in addition, the Friends of Falls Church Homeless Shelter has created an assistance fund to help residents meet their financial goals; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commend the Friends of Falls Church Homeless Shelter for its 20 years of providing comfortable and warm shelter to some of the area's neediest residents during the winter months; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to Hannah Jordan, chair of the Board of Directors of the Friends of Falls Church Homeless Shelter, as an expression of the General Assembly's respect and appreciation for the vital work the organization does on behalf of individuals experiencing homelessness in the Falls Church area.

INTRODUCED

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