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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 364

Offered February 25, 2016

Commending Wolf Trap National Park for the Performing Arts.

Patrons—Murphy, Bell, John J., Carr, Hope, Krizek, Rasoul, Sickles, Simon, Spruill, Sullivan and Watts;
 Senator: Favola

WHEREAS, in 1966, the United States Congress passed legislation to establish Wolf Trap National Park for the Performing Arts on farmland in Fairfax County that was donated by Catherine Filene Shouse; and

WHEREAS, Catherine Shouse donated 100 acres of land near Vienna and funds to build a large amphitheater; she wished to preserve the land from suburban development and create a venue where people could enjoy the arts in a natural setting; and

WHEREAS, Wolf Trap National Park for the Performing Arts, which has become one of the nation's treasured performing arts venues, is managed through a public-private partnership between the National Park Service, which maintains the grounds, and the Wolf Trap Foundation for the Performing Arts, which oversees the artistic, education, and administrative programs; and

WHEREAS, in the last 50 years, Wolf Trap National Park for the Performing Arts has become an integral part of the economy and cultural life of Northern Virginia, and thousands of local residents and other fans have enjoyed watching world-class artists from every genre perform in an attractive outdoor setting; and

WHEREAS, in 1968, the Wolf Trap Foundation for the Performing Arts was established as a 501(c)(3) at the request of the Secretary of the Interior who determined that it was in the public interest for a private foundation with expertise in the performing arts to present the performing arts program and certain related educational activities; and

WHEREAS, 2016 also marks the 45th anniversary of Wolf Trap's first performance; the star-studded inaugural program, held on June 1-2, 1971, at the Filene Center amphitheater, included the National Symphony Orchestra with Van Cliburn, the New York City Opera, the Choral Arts Society of Washington, the United States Marine Band, and other groups; and

WHEREAS, 2016 also marks the 100th anniversary of the National Park Service; since it opened, the goal of Wolf Trap National Park for the Performing Arts has been to present and create excellent and innovative performing arts programs for the enrichment, education, and enjoyment of diverse audiences and participants; and

WHEREAS, today, Wolf Trap National Park for the Performing Arts also presents The Barns at Wolf Trap; in 1981, Catherine Shouse donated a venue for a smaller performing arts facility; she supervised the relocation of two barns from Maine to Fairfax County that were then rebuilt to retain their rustic appeal and include superb acoustics and other amenities; and

WHEREAS, The Barns at Wolf Trap is the home of the Wolf Trap Opera, which hosts a well-regarded summer residency program for young singers—many of whom have gone on to become renowned international musicians; and

WHEREAS, the Wolf Trap Institute for Early Learning Through the Arts uses the performing arts to engage young children; the institute provides arts education to children up to the age of five, especially those who live in disadvantaged areas; and

WHEREAS, since its founding in 1981, the Wolf Trap Institute for Early Learning Through the Arts has developed into a national leader in arts and early childhood education, with 17 affiliates nationwide; and

WHEREAS, with a wide variety of performers and entertainment and a deep commitment to nurturing young artists and arts education, the Wolf Trap National Park for the Performing Arts has made many valued contributions to Fairfax County, the Commonwealth, and the nation; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commend Wolf Trap National Park for the Performing Arts on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the passage of legislation that established the park; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare copies of this resolution for presentation to Arvind Manocha, president and chief executive officer of the Wolf Trap Foundation for the Performing Arts, and to George Liffert, acting superintendent of the Wolf Trap Foundation for the Performing Arts, as an expression of the General Assembly's congratulations and admiration for its outstanding commitment to the performing arts and arts education.