

16106023D

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 454

Offered March 4, 2016

Commending The Basilica of Saint Mary of the Immaculate Conception.

Patrons—Davis, Bloxom, Hester, James, Jones, Knight, Leftwich, Lindsey, Mason, Miyares, Pogge, Rasoul, Spruill, Stolle, Taylor, Villanueva and Yancey; Senators: Alexander, Black, Cosgrove, DeSteph, Dunnavant, Lewis, Locke, Lucas and Wagner

WHEREAS, in 2016, The Basilica of Saint Mary of the Immaculate Conception in Norfolk celebrates its 25th anniversary as a basilica and the dedication of its entrance doors as Holy Doors of Mercy; and

WHEREAS, on December 8, 1991, the Church of Saint Mary of the Immaculate Conception became a Minor Basilica; it was the 200th anniversary of the founding of the church, and today, the building is the only basilica in the Commonwealth; and

WHEREAS, The Basilica of Saint Mary of the Immaculate Conception is also the only African American basilica and is often referred to as "The Mother Church of Tidewater Virginia"; it is the oldest parish community in the Catholic Diocese of Richmond and was founded in 1791 as St. Patrick's Church; and

WHEREAS, the original church was built in 1842 and destroyed by fire in 1856; when the present church was erected in 1858, it was renamed and dedicated to Mary of the Immaculate Conception; and

WHEREAS, The Basilica of Saint Mary of the Immaculate Conception is a beautiful 158-year-old structure in downtown Norfolk and is a historic landmark; it is a vibrant, predominantly African American worship community with many ministries and outreach programs; and

WHEREAS, at a mass on Palm Sunday, March 20, 2016, the entrance doors of The Basilica of Saint Mary of the Immaculate Conception will be dedicated as Holy Doors of Mercy, signifying the church's Jubilee Year of Mercy; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commend The Basilica of Saint Mary of the Immaculate Conception on the occasion of its 25th anniversary as a basilica and the dedication of its entrance doors as Holy Doors of Mercy; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the Reverend Father Jim Curran, rector of The Basilica of Saint Mary of the Immaculate Conception, as an expression of the General Assembly's respect and admiration for the basilica's many years of ministry and service to the people of Norfolk and the Commonwealth.

INTRODUCED

HJ454