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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 951

Offered February 14, 2017

Commending Craigs Baptist Church.

Patrons—Fowler, Cole, Farrell and Orrock; Senators: McDougale, Reeves and Stuart

WHEREAS, Craigs Baptist Church in Spotsylvania is marking the 250th anniversary of its founding; and

WHEREAS, Craigs Baptist Church was established on November 20, 1767, in the upper part of Spotsylvania, near Tinder, with 25 members; and

WHEREAS, originally known as Upper Spotsylvania Church, Craigs Baptist Church was the first Baptist church between the James and the Rappahannock Rivers; and

WHEREAS, Craigs Baptist Church came to be known by its present name in honor of its first pastor, Lewis Craig, who assumed office in 1770; and

WHEREAS, in the earliest days of Craigs Baptist Church's existence it was illegal to preach the Gospel without a license from the Anglican Church; and

WHEREAS, Lewis Craig was once pulled from the pulpit by the county sheriff for preaching with no license and tried before magistrates on the church yard; at various times he was jailed in Culpeper, Fredericksburg, Bowling Green, and Tappahannock; and

WHEREAS, after an exodus of church members and the pastor to Kentucky in 1781, Craigs Baptist Church was reconstituted in 1783; and

WHEREAS, the original location of Craigs Baptist Church was on a road that was impassible by automobiles and the church moved to its present location in 1912, a few years after the advent of the Ford Model T; and

WHEREAS, the current Craigs Baptist Church building was dedicated on September 29, 1912, and Dr. Aubrey Williams preached the dedicatory sermon in front of an audience of some 800 to 1,000 people from a large number of churches in Spotsylvania and Orange Counties; and

WHEREAS, following Dr. Aubrey Williams' sermon, an offering was collected and an amount was quickly raised that allowed the church to be dedicated debt free; and

WHEREAS, at the 1912 dedication it was noted that while Craigs Baptist Church is small in numbers and wealth, it is rich in spirit of sacrifice and devotion to the Master's cause, and that still holds true today; and

WHEREAS, Craigs Baptist Church is a caring congregation that gladly welcomes all, and offers preaching and teaching that is centered on the Word of God and ministries to meet the spiritual needs of every age; and

WHEREAS, the devoted congregation of Craigs Baptist Church seeks to intimately know Christ, continually grow in Christ, and to passionately go as Christ in their community; and

WHEREAS, Craigs Baptist Church adheres to the Baptist Faith and Message of the Southern Baptist Convention; weekly services are held in the sanctuary of Craigs Baptist Church and at its nearby Community Life Center; and

WHEREAS, Craigs Baptist Church has been served faithfully by many ministers during its illustrious history, and the church has been led by Pastor John Swain since 1992; and

WHEREAS, the congregation of Craigs Baptist Church is proud of its powerful history and of the men who stood unafraid and spoke their message with courage like that of John the Baptist; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commend Craigs Baptist Church on the occasion of the 250th anniversary of its founding; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to John Swain, pastor of Craigs Baptist Church, as an expression of the General Assembly's admiration for the church's magnificent heritage and best wishes for a future worthy of its past.

INTRODUCED

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