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## HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 999

Offered February 16, 2017

*Commending the Summer Training and Enrichment Program.*

Patrons—Mullin, Price and Yancey

WHEREAS, the Summer Training and Enrichment Program is a successful job training and work-readiness program for at-risk young people that is part of the City of Newport News' overall effort to reduce gang activity and violence; and

WHEREAS, the Summer Training and Enrichment Program (S.T.E.P.) was created under the Newport News Youth & Young Adult Gang Violence Initiative, which is part of the city's strategic plan to address public safety; and

WHEREAS, S.T.E.P. began in 2014, when Newport News budgeted \$1.1 million for youth and gang violence prevention for the first time and the city hired a coordinator to oversee those efforts; and

WHEREAS, S.T.E.P. introduces at-risk young people ages 16 - 24 who live in Newport News to various careers and trades while enhancing their professional readiness skills; and

WHEREAS, the 10-week S.T.E.P. program places young people in jobs at city departments, nonprofit organizations, and for-profit businesses, where they work 25 - 30 hours per week and earn a stipend; and

WHEREAS, in addition to the paid work experiences, S.T.E.P. offers other enrichment activities such as field trips, workshops, financial literacy training, guest speakers, and GED preparation classes; and

WHEREAS, S.T.E.P. was so successful in exposing young people to the world of work through hands-on job training that participation in the program more than doubled in its second year of existence; and

WHEREAS, S.T.E.P. helps at-risk young people start preparing for their future and is designed to redirect and support positive behavior, preventing further gang involvement and other risky behaviors; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commend the Summer Training and Enrichment Program, a successful job training and work-readiness program for at-risk young people in the City of Newport News; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to MaRhonda Echols, youth gang and violence prevention coordinator for the City of Newport News, as an expression of the General Assembly's admiration for the Summer Training and Enrichment Program's efforts to reduce gang participation and provide exposure to different career options for young people in Newport News.

INTRODUCED

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