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SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 157

Offered February 22, 2017

*Commending Holy & Whole Life Changing Ministries International.*

Patron—Wexton

WHEREAS, Pastor Michelle C. Thomas established Holy & Whole Life Changing Ministries International in Lansdowne in 2006; and

WHEREAS, Holy & Whole was the first church in Loudoun County established by an African American woman; the church set out to become a beacon of hope, faith, and community involvement, charging its members to have a positive impact on the community through service and faith; and

WHEREAS, in May 2012, Pastor Thomas founded "Faith Has a Voice," an advocacy initiative committed to educating, empowering, and engaging the Greater Loudoun County Community of Faith; and

WHEREAS, in April 2013, Holy & Whole founded and opened Loudoun County's first Christian STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) preschool and STEM summer camp, which are dedicated to building interest in STEM, increasing opportunities for students, and inspiring the next generation of STEM leaders; and

WHEREAS, Pastor Thomas, the Holy & Whole leadership team, and several other Loudoun County faith leaders founded the Loudoun Freedom Center, an educational nonprofit organization dedicated to the preservation and education of African American cultural sites, resources, and communities in Loudoun County; and

WHEREAS, in February 2015, Pastor Thomas rediscovered The Belmont Slave Cemetery on the grounds of the former Belmont Plantation, and on October 11, 2015, Pastor Thomas and the Loudoun Freedom Center were granted stewardship of the cemetery, the site where the slaves of the Belmont Plantation were buried; and

WHEREAS, in August 2016, Holy & Whole, under the leadership of Pastor Thomas, organized and held the One Loudoun Revival at Ida Lee Park in Leesburg, an inter-denominational, multi-faith, multi-racial, community worship experience, uniting all churches in Loudoun County under the banner of One Lord, One Faith, One Baptism, One Loudoun; and

WHEREAS, in January 2016, Pastor Thomas became the first African American woman to be appointed to serve as a member of the Loudoun County Heritage Commission; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate of Virginia, That Holy & Whole Life Changing Ministries International hereby be commended on the occasion of its 10th anniversary; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to Pastor Michelle C. Thomas, founder and senior pastor of Holy & Whole Life Changing Ministries International, as an expression of the Senate of Virginia's admiration for its significant contributions to Loudoun County.