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SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 127

Offered February 7, 2018

Commending the Heart of Appalachia Tourism Authority.

Patrons—Chafin, Barker, Black, Carrico, Cosgrove, Dance, Deeds, DeSteph, Dunnavant, Ebbin, Edwards, Favola, Hanger, Howell, Lewis, Locke, Lucas, Marsden, Mason, McClellan, McDougale, McPike, Newman, Obenshain, Peake, Petersen, Reeves, Ruff, Spruill, Stanley, Stuart, Sturtevant, Suetterlein, Surovell, Vogel, Wagner and Wexton; Delegate: Rasoul

WHEREAS, in 2018, the Heart of Appalachia Tourism Authority celebrates 25 years of promoting the unique culture of Southwest Virginia and its many opportunities for relaxation and recreation; and

WHEREAS, founded in 1993, the Heart of Appalachia Tourism Authority, also known as the Virginia Coalfield Regional Tourism Authority, provides tourism and marketing development to the Counties of Buchanan, Dickenson, Lee, Russell, Scott, Tazewell, and Wise and the City of Norton; and

WHEREAS, the Heart of Appalachia Tourism Authority represents 750 businesses and tourism assets and works diligently to increase visitation to the region; and

WHEREAS, in 2013, the Heart of Appalachia Tourism Authority established the state-certified Heart of Appalachia Visitor Center in St. Paul and, in 2015, the organization launched a new website to better promote regional communities, attractions, lodging, restaurants, and events; and

WHEREAS, the Heart of Appalachia Tourism Authority has distributed more than 75,000 copies of the *Heart of Appalachia Adventure Guide* and worked with Spearhead Trails to develop a brochure representing the trail system in the region; and

WHEREAS, the Heart of Appalachia Tourism Authority also launched the Fish to Your Heart's Content campaign to showcase the region's many opportunities for fishing and the Appalachian Backroads campaign to encourage drivers to discover and enjoy the region's scenic vistas; and

WHEREAS, the Heart of Appalachia Tourism Authority partnered with the Clinch River Valley Initiative to create the Taste of Clinch map, a guide to 50 local eateries along Virginia's Hidden River; and

WHEREAS, the Heart of Appalachia Tourism Authority supports local artists and musicians, such as Kaitlyn Baker, a singer-songwriter from Pound, who wrote, performed, and filmed a music video for her song "Heart of Appalachia," which has been used in radio, television, and social media marketing to promote the region; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commend the Heart of Appalachia Tourism Authority on the occasion of its 25th anniversary; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the Heart of Appalachia Tourism Authority as an expression of the General Assembly's admiration for the organization's many contributions to the region and work to increase tourism to the Commonwealth.

INTRODUCED

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