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SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 24

Offered February 2, 2018

Commending Sonnie P. Penn Elementary School.

Patrons—McPike; Delegate: Guzman

WHEREAS, Sonnie P. Penn Elementary School, a public school in Prince William County, has promoted academic excellence, a positive and safe school climate, and supportive relationships among its students, staff, and the community for 20 years; and

WHEREAS, Penn Elementary School, located on Queen Chapel Road, was named for Sonnie P. Penn, who inspired large numbers of students to achieve greatness and served as a tremendous role model; he is remembered as not only an educator of 20 years, but an active leader in the community who inspired children in phenomenal ways; and

WHEREAS, Penn Elementary School opened with approximately 500 students in its first year; by the 2016-2017 academic year, it had grown to serve 875 pre-kindergarten through fifth-grade students, with more than 90 faculty and staff members; and

WHEREAS, the population of Penn Elementary School is diverse and nearly mirrors that of Prince William County, with the student body being 29 percent English Language Learners, 27 percent Hispanic, 25 percent African American, 28 percent White, and 12 percent Asian; and

WHEREAS, to maintain Penn Elementary School's facility and provide additional space for its growing student body, additional classrooms and a wing were added in 2012-2013; the seven new classrooms and improved office space helped the school meet the needs of the community; and

WHEREAS, Penn Elementary School is a past and current recipient of the School of Excellence award, the highest distinction awarded by the Prince William County School Board, and it continues to grow as an academic leader; and

WHEREAS, Penn Elementary School has a history of community support through partnerships with local businesses; the school promotes parent involvement through its Parent-Teacher Organization, Career Days, Multicultural Nights, English language acquisition and Parents as Educational Partners classes, and the American Heart Association Jump Rope for Heart event; and

WHEREAS, Penn Elementary School uses the Positive Behavior Intervention Support and Responsive Classroom model, a nationally recognized approach that fosters a strong sense of community, creates a safe environment in which students learn and grow, and sets high expectations for teacher and student behavior; and

WHEREAS, Penn Elementary School also embraces professional development for its faculty, implements best practices for English Language Learners, and supports cultural competency and the integration of technology in the classroom; and

WHEREAS, Penn Elementary School offers many student leadership and extracurricular opportunities, including robotics, safety patrols, strings, chorus, Girl Smarts, and after-school enrichment to promote academic and behavioral success; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate of Virginia, That Sonnie P. Penn Elementary School hereby be commended on the occasion of its 20th anniversary; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to Sonnie P. Penn Elementary School as an expression of the Senate of Virginia's admiration for the school's contributions to the community and dedication to giving students a strong foundation for lifelong learning.

INTRODUCED

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