

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 599

Commending the Washington Capitals.

Agreed to by the House of Delegates, January 21, 2019
Agreed to by the Senate, February 20, 2019

WHEREAS, on June 7, 2018, the Washington Capitals claimed their first National Hockey League championship in the franchise's 44-year history with a thrilling win in the 2018 Stanley Cup Finals; and

WHEREAS, the Washington Capitals defeated the red-hot Vegas Golden Knights in the Stanley Cup Finals in five games, closing out the best-of-seven series with four consecutive wins to lift Lord Stanley's Cup, the oldest existing trophy awarded in a professional sports league; and

WHEREAS, the Washington Capitals opened their historic postseason campaign as the Metropolitan Division number one seed and defeated the Columbus Blue Jackets in six games, then exorcised years of heartbreak to advance past the second round of the Stanley Cup playoffs for the first time since 1998, overcoming their longtime rivals, the Pittsburgh Penguins, with a dramatic overtime win in game six; and

WHEREAS, the Washington Capitals defeated the Tampa Bay Lightning, the Atlantic Division number one seed, in seven games to clinch the Eastern Conference title, win their second Prince of Wales Trophy, and advance to the Stanley Cup Finals, with beloved Capitals radio announcer John Walton prophetically asserting, "It's OK to believe"; and

WHEREAS, with the 2018 Stanley Cup Finals tied 1 - 1 after the first two games in Las Vegas, Washington Capitals stars T.J. Oshie and Matt Niskanen shocked and delighted fans by riding the MetroRail Red Line to games three and four at Capital One Arena; and

WHEREAS, tens of thousands of fans watched Game 5 of the Stanley Cup Finals inside and outside of Capital One Arena and witnessed the Washington Capitals become the first team from Washington, D.C., in the four major professional sports leagues in the United States to win a championship since 1992, ending one of the longest citywide championship droughts in the country; and

WHEREAS, Alexander Ovechkin, captain of the Washington Capitals since 2010 and the first overall pick in the 2004 National Hockey League Draft, exhibited extraordinary leadership and delivered superstar-caliber play, leading all scorers in the postseason with 15 goals and receiving the Conn Smythe Trophy as the most valuable player for the 2018 Stanley Cup playoffs; and

WHEREAS, during the 2018 Stanley Cup playoffs, Washington Capitals goalie Braden Holtby recorded 639 saves and two shutouts for a remarkable 0.922 save percentage; and

WHEREAS, during the 2018 Stanley Cup playoffs, Washington Capitals' Evgeny Kuznetsov recorded 32 points, including 12 goals and 20 assists, the second most points scored in a Stanley Cup playoff year since 1997, and he was only the fifth player to record 30 or more points in a single Stanley Cup playoff year since 1997; and

WHEREAS, Barry Trotz, head coach of the Washington Capitals, and the entire coaching staff kept the Capitals composed and organized, despite facing obstacles and adversity throughout the regular season and the playoffs; and

WHEREAS, the entire Washington Capitals postseason roster banded together as one family to contribute to the Stanley Cup victory, including Nicklas Backstrom, Jay Beagle, Travis Boyd, Madison Bowey, Andre Burakovsky, John Carlson, Alex Chiasson, Brett Connolly, Pheonix Copley, Christian Djoos, Lars Eller, Shane Gersich, Philipp Grubauer, Braden Holtby, Jakub Jerabek, Michal Kempny, Evgeny Kuznetsov, Matt Niskanen, Dmitry Orlov, Brooks Orpik, T.J. Oshie, Alex Ovechkin, Devante Smith-Pelly, Chandler Stephenson, Jakub Vrana, Nathan Walker, and Tom Wilson; and

WHEREAS, Ted Leonsis, chief executive officer of Monumental Sports and owner of the Washington Capitals since 1999, has built a culture of success and contributed greatly to the Washington, D.C., community through philanthropy and support for youth leadership in the region; and

WHEREAS, the Washington Capitals are welcoming to fans from all walks of life and held a variety of special events throughout the season, including Fan Appreciation Week, Salute to the Military Night, and the organization's first annual Pride Night in support of the LGBT community on February 27, 2018; several members of the team, including Braden Holtby, Chandler Stephenson, Brett Connolly, and Nathan Walker also attended the 2018 Human Rights Campaign National Dinner; and

WHEREAS, headquartered in the Commonwealth, the Washington Capitals practice at the MedStar Capitals Iceplex in Arlington, and a majority of the players reside in Virginia; the members of the team make many generous contributions to the Northern Virginia community, including through Caps Care programs to support special needs children, hunger relief, and cancer research; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly hereby

ENROLLED

HJ599ER

commend the Washington Capitals on winning the 2018 Stanley Cup Finals; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the Washington Capitals as an expression of the General Assembly's admiration for the team's incredible achievements on and off the ice.