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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 808

Offered February 5, 2019

Commending the Byrd Theatre.

Patrons—Peace and Carr; Senator: McClellan

WHEREAS, for 90 years, the Byrd Theatre in Richmond has entertained and educated generations of Virginians and visitors through its mission to expand the big screen experience, celebrate the art of cinema, and preserve the legacy of the nation's grand motion picture palaces; and

WHEREAS, built in 1928, the Byrd Theatre is named for William Byrd, founder of Richmond, and is listed on the Virginia Landmarks Register and the National Register of Historic Places; and

WHEREAS, the Byrd Theatre is a fine example of the opulent movie palaces of the 1920s and 1930s and has operated as a cinema for nearly its entire history; its beautiful interior, featuring painted murals, marble walls, gold leaf arches, a cantilevered balcony, a richly appointed mezzanine, and a two-and-a-half-ton crystal chandelier, has been largely unaltered since its early days; and

WHEREAS, the Byrd Theatre is well known for its Mighty Wurlitzer Organ, a custom-made theatre organ that was designed to accompany silent movies; the theatre proudly offers live organ shows every Saturday evening before movie showings; and

WHEREAS, since 2007, this beloved architectural treasure and irreplaceable Richmond icon has been preserved by the Byrd Theatre Foundation, a nonprofit corporation that has led restoration efforts and integrated cultural and educational events, while still showing major motion pictures at reasonable prices; and

WHEREAS, the Byrd Theatre Foundation strives to elevate the Byrd Theatre's landmark position among American theatres as a center for film history and literacy; and

WHEREAS, the Byrd Theatre benefits more than 100,000 moviegoers each year, including residents, students, groups, businesses, and tourists, and serves thousands more through film collaborations, special events, and community use; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commend the Byrd Theatre on the occasion of its 90th anniversary; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the Byrd Theatre Foundation as an expression of the General Assembly's admiration for the Byrd Theatre's unique contributions to cultural life in Richmond.

INTRODUCED

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