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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 820

Offered February 5, 2019

Commending Falling Creek Ironworks.

Patrons—Robinson, Adams, D.M., McQuinn and Ware; Senators: Chase and Sturtevant

WHEREAS, the historic Falling Creek Ironworks was established in 1619 as the first iron furnace in the English New World colonies, organized and supported by the Virginia Company of London with the goal of expanding trade, mining iron ore, and establishing the first system of private land ownership in the area; and

WHEREAS, the first exploration of the original Falling Creek Ironworks site was organized in 1876 for the Virginia Historical Society, and elements of the iron furnace and artifacts were unearthed between 1925 and 1950 by Roger Bensley, the property owner at the time; and

WHEREAS, the Archaeological Society of Virginia conducted additional archaeological testing of the site in 1963; the Virginia Department of Historic Resources conducted on-site evaluations in 1990; The College of William & Mary Center for Archaeological Research conducted archaeological investigations in 1993; and the remains of wooden timbers were discovered in 2006 after Tropical Storm Gaston embedded them in the creek bank; and

WHEREAS, the Falling Creek Ironworks Foundation was created in 1991, and a Virginia Historic Preservation Easement of eight acres surrounding the immediate site was recorded for the property in 1995; and

WHEREAS, the Falling Creek Ironworks Park and surrounding 14.6 acres were established in 1995; associated with this site is Virginia's first wayside park, which was established in 1934 and includes the oldest historic stone bridge in the county, completed in 1828; and

WHEREAS, a cooperative partnership exists between Chesterfield County Parks and Recreation and the Falling Creek Ironworks Foundation to manage and protect the site, as well as to promote public education about the historical significance of the site; and

WHEREAS, Falling Creek Ironworks is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and the Virginia Landmarks Register and is recognized as a Chesterfield County Historic Landmark; and

WHEREAS, as the first foundry in the Western Hemisphere to smelt iron ore into pig iron, Falling Creek Ironworks is recognized as one of the earliest industrial achievements of the 17th century and the beginning of American heavy industry; and

WHEREAS, Falling Creek Ironworks serves as an important symbol and an educational tool for telling the history of early industrial achievement in Chesterfield County, Virginia, and the United States; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commend Falling Creek Ironworks on the occasion of the 400th anniversary of its establishment; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the Falling Creek Ironworks Foundation as an expression of the General Assembly's admiration for the organization's work to maintain Falling Creek Ironworks and preserve the history and heritage of Chesterfield County and the Commonwealth.

INTRODUCED

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