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SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 472

Offered February 18, 2019

Commending Thomas Kail.

Patrons—Ebbin; Delegate: Sickles

WHEREAS, Thomas Kail, an Alexandria native and an accomplished musical theater director known for the Broadway hit *Hamilton: An American Musical*, was named a Kennedy Center Honoree in 2018; and

WHEREAS, Thomas Kail grew up in Alexandria and graduated from Sidwell Friends School in 1995 and Wesleyan University in 1999; his experiences growing up in Northern Virginia, close to the nation's capital, would become a major influence on his design and direction of *Hamilton*, which has been lauded as an achievement of historical and cultural reimagining; and

WHEREAS, Thomas Kail's interest in history and how to represent historical figures was first piqued by traveling to historical locations such as the Masonic Temple in Alexandria, George Washington's Mount Vernon, and James Madison's Montpelier; and

WHEREAS, Thomas Kail began his career in theater at New Jersey's American Stage Company before directing two plays, Julia Jordan's *A Bus Stop Play*, and Beau Willimon's *Zusammenbruch*, both which played at the American Airlines Theatre on Broadway; and

WHEREAS, Thomas Kail directed the Broadway musical *In the Heights*, written by Lin-Manuel Miranda, which garnered him a Tony Award nomination for Best Direction of a Musical; the musical premiered on Broadway; and

WHEREAS, after years of directing successful plays on and off Broadway, Thomas Kail again teamed up with playwright Lin-Manuel Miranda to direct *Hamilton*, for which he won the Lucille Lortel Award for Outstanding Director, the Drama Desk Award for Outstanding Director of a Musical, the Tony Award for Best Direction of a Musical, the Laurence Olivier Award for Best Director, and Kennedy Center Honors; and

WHEREAS, Thomas Kail's production of *Hamilton* was inspired by the 2004 biography *Alexander Hamilton* by historian Ron Chernow, and was unique for its incorporation of hip hop, R&B, pop, soul, traditional-style show tunes, and color-conscious casting of non-white actors as the Founding Fathers and other historical figures; the musical achieved both critical acclaim and box office success; and

WHEREAS, Thomas Kail won the 2016 Emmy for his direction of *Grease: Live* for Fox Broadcasting Company; he is also the recipient of a Drama Desk Award, an Obie Award, a Callaway Award, and a Martin E. Segal Award from Lincoln Center; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commend Thomas Kail, accomplished musical theater director and Alexandria native, for receiving the Kennedy Center Honors in 2018; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to Thomas Kail as an expression of the General Assembly's admiration for his contributions to cultural life in the United States.

INTRODUCED

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