

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 89

Commending the University of Virginia.

Agreed to by the Senate, January 17, 2019

WHEREAS, the story of the University of Virginia began over 200 years ago with the creation of a new model for higher learning, one shaped by the belief that only educated citizen-leaders would sustain freedom in the new republic; and

WHEREAS, on October 6, 1817, United States President James Monroe and former Presidents Thomas Jefferson and James Madison joined dignitaries, townspeople, and enslaved laborers in the laying of the cornerstone of Pavilion VII, the first building constructed in Jefferson's Academical Village for Central College; and

WHEREAS, on August 1, 1818, 21 representatives met at the Mountaintop Inn at Rockfish Gap and selected Central College as the home of a new state university; and

WHEREAS, on January 25, 1819, the General Assembly of Virginia established the charter for the University of Virginia, the first nonsectarian university in the United States; and

WHEREAS, the University of Virginia is a public institution of higher learning guided by a founding vision of discovery, innovation, and development of the full potential of talented students from all walks of life, that serves the Commonwealth, the nation, and the world by developing responsible citizen leaders and professionals; the university offers an affordable, world-class education that is consistently ranked among the best institutions, public or private, in the country; and

WHEREAS, the University of Virginia now includes 11 schools in Charlottesville, the College at Wise in Southwest Virginia, and a renowned academic medical center committed to providing outstanding patient care, educating tomorrow's health care leaders, and discovering new and better ways to treat diseases; its physicians and nurses are recognized for preeminence in patient care, education, and research; and

WHEREAS, the University of Virginia welcomes those who show exceptional promise, where students, faculty, and staff are, as Jefferson envisioned, "not afraid to follow truth wherever it may lead, nor to tolerate any error so long as reason is left free to combat it"; and

WHEREAS, the University of Virginia is marked by its enduring commitment to a vibrant and unique residential learning environment with a free and collegial exchange of ideas and the unwavering support of a collaborative, diverse community bound together by distinctive foundational values of honor, integrity, trust, and respect; and

WHEREAS, over the past 200 years, the University of Virginia has grown from an institution at which the only students were white males, and which was not fully coeducational until 1970, to an institution at which over 50 percent of the students are women and one-third are minorities; and

WHEREAS, students thrive within a groundbreaking model of self-governance, a culture of leadership and responsibility which creates a lasting sense of initiative, decisiveness, and self-confidence; students adhere to the Honor Code, pledging to never lie, cheat, or steal, and by leading lives of honor, students have continuously renewed the unique spirit of compassion and interconnectedness that has come to be called the Community of Trust; and

WHEREAS, the Cavalier student-athletes consistently pursue academic and athletic distinction, capturing 76 Atlantic Coast Conference (ACC) championships since 2002, more than any other ACC school, across 25 NCAA Division I sports; University of Virginia teams have won six NCAA championships and 24 ACC titles since the fall of 2012 and placed first in the 2015 Men's Capital One Cup, honoring the nation's top Division I athletic programs; and 404 of the University's student-athletes were named to the Atlantic Coast Conference Academic Honor Roll in 2017 - 2018; and

WHEREAS, the arts at the University of Virginia are crucial to the residential experience, inspiring students to innovate, create, collaborate, explore, and discover pursuits that enrich the larger community through an extraordinary array of performances, exhibitions, and creative opportunities; and

WHEREAS, the University of Virginia counts among its alumni individuals who have changed the nation and the world, including vice presidents, senators, congressional representatives, governors, poets, actors, scientists, authors, Olympians, inventors, educators, entertainers, astronauts, ambassadors, journalists, doctors, nurses, business leaders, and pioneers in a wealth of fields and industries; and

WHEREAS, the University of Virginia's faculty and staff pursue discovery through collaboration and cross-disciplinary exploration, develop cross-disciplinary institutes and initiatives, and provide valuable educational and research opportunities with a measurable impact, focusing research on complex intellectual and social challenges and creating new knowledge that produces unanticipated technologies and innovative ideas; and

WHEREAS, the University of Virginia is one of the great national and global universities of the 21st century, where the leaders of tomorrow are forged through the sharing of knowledge and the candid exchange of ideas, and where a 200-year commitment to Thomas Jefferson's belief in the "illimitable freedom of the human mind" has energized the university community and will continue to animate life at the University of Virginia for centuries to come; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate of Virginia, That the University of Virginia hereby be commended on the occasion of its 200th anniversary; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to Frank M. Conner III, Rector, and James E. Ryan, President, of the University of Virginia, as an expression of the Senate of Virginia's admiration for the institution's extraordinary history, unparalleled legacy of excellence, and invaluable contributions to the Commonwealth, the nation, and the world.