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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 134

Offered January 10, 2020

Designating October 9, in 2020 and in each succeeding year, as Hangul Day in Virginia.

Patrons—Keam, Bulova and Helmer; Senator: Petersen

Referred to Committee on Rules

WHEREAS, Hangul, the official alphabet of both the Republic of Korea and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, was invented in the 15th century by King Sejong the Great of Korea and has been used to write the Korean language since its creation; and

WHEREAS, in 1446, the 28th year of his kingship, King Sejong published the Hunminjeongeum, the realization of his decree to research and develop a writing system that would replace the complex Chinese characters used at the time and be simple and easy for Koreans to master and communicate; and

WHEREAS, the Hangul system consists of 24 characters, including 14 consonants and 10 vowels; the consonant characters are formed with curved or angled lines, while the vowels are composed of vertical or horizontal straight lines together with short lines on either side of the main line; and

WHEREAS, in 1928, the Korean alphabet was named Hangul, and in 1940 Korean language scholars Lee Hee Seung and Lee Byeong Ro discovered the Hunminjeongeum Haerye manuscript and calculated October 9, 1446, to be the birth date of Hangul; and

WHEREAS, the Korean language is one of five strategic languages, along with Arabic, Chinese, Japanese, and Russian, as designated by the National Security Language Initiative, that Americans are encouraged to learn; and

WHEREAS, the Korean language is one of nine foreign languages the College Board approved to be on the SAT Subject Tests in languages, which assess a student's ability in reading and listening to a foreign language; other approved languages include Chinese, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Latin, Modern Hebrew, and Spanish; and

WHEREAS, there are more than 50,000 Americans, including Americans with Korean heritage, learning Hangul throughout the United States; with the popularity of K-pop, K-dramas, and Korean food rising, the Korean language is now taught throughout the world; and

WHEREAS, Virginia is home to one of the largest and fastest-growing populations of Korean Americans in the United States; and

WHEREAS, Korean Americans have become an integral part of mainstream American society and have made important contributions to the Commonwealth in the fields of finance, technology, law, medicine, education, sports, media, the arts, the military, and government, as well as in other areas; and

WHEREAS, as the Korean American community prepares for a new era and builds upon its history, Korean Americans must instill in younger generations the proper appreciation for the courage and values of their forebearers, a deep sense of their roots, and pride in their own cultural heritage, including Hangul, so that they may better contribute to the rich ethnic and cultural diversity of the Commonwealth; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly designate October 9, in 2020 and in each succeeding year, as Hangul Day in Virginia; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates transmit a copy of this resolution to The United Korean School of Greater Washington so that the organization may be apprised of the sense of the General Assembly of Virginia in this matter; and, be it

RESOLVED FINALLY, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates post the designation of this day on the General Assembly's website.

INTRODUCED

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