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**HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 140**

Offered January 15, 2020

*Designating February, in 2020 and in each succeeding year, as Winter Honey Month in Virginia.*

Patron—Morefield

Referred to Committee on Rules

WHEREAS, honey bees are an integral part of the ecosystem, providing the pollination that is necessary for the production of many fruits and vegetables harvested each year; and

WHEREAS, it is estimated by the American Beekeeping Federation that as much as one third of the food consumed in the United States is impacted either directly or indirectly by honey bee pollination; and

WHEREAS, in recent years, the Commonwealth's honey bee population has struggled against the harmful effects of parasitic infestations, particularly by the Varroa mite and wax moth; intrusions from predatory animals; pesticide and insecticide use; habitat loss; a lack of available food; and Colony Collapse Disorder; and

WHEREAS, since 2012, the Richlands Winter Honey Festival has been held annually to educate the public about the honey bee, promote awareness of the need for their protection and perpetuation, and encourage appreciation of honey and its many uses; and

WHEREAS, growing in size each year, the Richlands Winter Honey Festival features bee keeping workshops, food events, arts and crafts classes, bird-watching tours, concerts and performances, wilderness walks, storytelling and literary events, and other family-friendly activities; and

WHEREAS, the Richlands Winter Honey Festival is made possible through the efforts of many volunteers, beekeepers, and merchants, as well as the support of several local businesses and institutions, including Tazewell County Mercantile, the Historic Crab Orchard Museum, Southwest Virginia Community College, and the Appalachian Arts Center; and

WHEREAS, drawing the community together each winter, much as the hive gathers around the queen to keep her warm through the colder months, the Richlands Winter Honey Festival has become a highly anticipated local tradition, and Winter Honey Month will provide an opportunity for all Virginians to gain a greater appreciation and understanding of the honey bee; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly designate February, in 2020 and in each succeeding year, as Winter Honey Month in Virginia; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates transmit a copy of this resolution to organizers of the Richlands Winter Honey Festival so that they 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 month on the General Assembly's website.

INTRODUCED

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