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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 218

Offered February 10, 2020

Commending the Stream Critter Cube Lab.

Patrons—Delaney, Cole, M.L., Hope and Reid; Senators: Bell and Howell

WHEREAS, the Stream Critter Cube Lab, an educational program created by staff in the Fairfax County Department of Public Works and Environmental Services, was awarded a National Association of Counties Achievement Award in 2019; and

WHEREAS, recognized by the association in the category of Civic Education and Public Information, the Stream Critter Cube Lab offers a novel, hands-on way for students to learn more about how scientists monitor the health of a stream's ecosystem; and

WHEREAS, since certain species are more tolerant to pollutants than others, an ecologist typically assesses water quality in part by measuring the biodiversity in a given sample, treating the quantity and diversity of species present, particularly the presence of benthic macroinvertebrates, as an expression of the stream's health and ability to support life; and

WHEREAS, with the challenges of reliably holding field events due to unpredictable weather conditions and stream elevations, the Watershed Education and Outreach group in the Fairfax County Department of Public Works and Environmental Services devised a low-cost way to replicate the stream monitoring experience in the classroom; and

WHEREAS, using an interactive dice game that generates biodiversity data for students to collect and interpret, the Stream Critter Cube Lab offers a fun and engaging way for students to better understand the process by which ecologists study and determine the overall health of a stream; and

WHEREAS, by effectively bringing nature into the classroom, the Stream Critter Cube Lab greatly facilitates student understanding of the value of stream sampling and the ecological insights it provides, preparing future generations to be better, well-informed stewards of our earth and streams; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commend the Stream Critter Cube Lab, an educational program organized within the Fairfax County Department of Public Works and Environmental Services, for receiving a National Association of Counties Achievement Award for Civic Education and Public Information in 2019; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the Watershed Education and Outreach group, creators of the Stream Critter Cube Lab, as an expression of the General Assembly's admiration for the program's innovative approach and best wishes for its continued success.

INTRODUCED

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