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## HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 237

Offered February 17, 2020

*Commending the Loudoun Abused Women's Shelter.*

Patrons—Subramanyam and Murphy; Senators: Bell, Boysko and Favola

WHEREAS, for more than 35 years, the Loudoun Abused Women's Shelter has offered safety, hope, and empowerment to survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, and abuse by providing essential services, information, and support; and

WHEREAS, the Loudoun Abused Women's Shelter (LAWS) traces its roots to 1984, when three Loudoun County women established Loudoun Citizens for Social Justice to provide community-based care; the first shelter location opened the following year, with 15 beds for women and children fleeing domestic violence; and

WHEREAS, in the 1990s, LAWS opened a satellite office to provide counseling for women who were not residing in the shelter and became one of the first domestic violence programs in Virginia to provide free legal representation; the organization expanded its services to survivors of sexual assault through its rape crisis center; and

WHEREAS, in 2001, LAWS opened its Community Services Center in Leesburg to better serve clients in need of legal advocacy, counseling, parenting classes, and support groups, among other services, and two years later, the organization added a Spanish-speaking case worker; and

WHEREAS, LAWS worked with a team of community partners to form the Loudoun County Domestic Abuse Response Team in 2005, established the nationally accredited Loudoun Child Advocacy Center in 2008, and was a founding member of the Sexual Abuse Response Team in 2018; and

WHEREAS, in 2019, LAWS provided direct services to 1,243 individuals and education to 7,575 individuals through prevention and awareness programs; the LAWS Emergency Shelter housed 51 adults and 37 children, and 638 survivors of domestic violence received other support and services over the course of the year; and

WHEREAS, in 2019, LAWS served hundreds of survivors of child abuse and more than 200 adult victims of sexual assault, provided counseling to more than 1,200 individuals on its 24-hour crisis hotline, and assisted more than 400 people with legal services; and

WHEREAS, LAWS received the Nonprofit Organization of the Year Award from the Loudoun County Chamber of Commerce in 2013 and the Nonprofit of the Year Award from the *Loudoun Times-Mirror* in 2014 and 2019; and

WHEREAS, LAWS has fulfilled its mission through the hard work and dedication of its dozens of volunteers and professional staff, the leadership of its board of directors, and generous donations from other organizations, businesses, and individuals; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commend the Loudoun Abused Women's Shelter on the occasion of its 35th anniversary; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the Loudoun Abused Women's Shelter as an expression of the General Assembly's admiration for its legacy of contributions to members of the Loudoun County community in need.

INTRODUCED

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