

2020 SESSION

ENROLLED

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 262

Commending PRS.

Agreed to by the House of Delegates, February 24, 2020
Agreed to by the Senate, February 27, 2020

WHEREAS, for 50 years, PRS, a nonprofit organization headquartered in Oakton, has supported the residents of the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area by providing mental health, crisis intervention, and suicide prevention services; and

WHEREAS, PRS traces its roots to the early 1960s, when changes in the perception and treatment of mental illness resulted in a need for transitional care to bridge the gap between hospitalization and a return to community life; and

WHEREAS, in 1963, under the direction of Vera Mellen, the Northern Virginia Mental Health Association established the precursor to PRS, a program to assist patients that had been recently discharged from Western State Hospital in Staunton; the program offered participants an opportunity to discuss goals and identify their needs for housing, employment, and transportation in a supportive environment; and

WHEREAS, on June 11, 1970, the program was incorporated as the Social Center and subsequently opened satellite programs in Mount Vernon, Springfield, and southern Fairfax County; four years later, the program that had begun with less than a dozen participants and only one full-time staff member had grown to serve 300 people with a professional staff of 18; and

WHEREAS, by the 1980s, the Social Center, then the Social Center for Psychiatric Rehabilitation, had evolved to provide more comprehensive vocational, educational, recreational, and case management services designed to help participants lead more independent lives; and

WHEREAS, as part of a reorganization in 1994, the Social Center for Psychiatric Rehabilitation was renamed Psychiatric Rehabilitation Services, which was ultimately shortened to PRS, to better reflect the growing scope and nature of its program activities; and

WHEREAS, PRS founder Vera Mellen retired in 1998, after 35 years of exceptional service, and left the organization under the capable leadership of Wendy Gradison, who formalized new sets of programs, including community housing, employment services, community support services, and day programs; and

WHEREAS, in 2011, PRS expanded its programs to include people with emotional and behavioral disorders, mild intellectual disabilities, developmental disorders, and substance abuse disorders, in addition to clients with mental illnesses and co-occurring disorders; two years later, the organization had more than 70 clinicians and staff members serving more than 900 individuals; and

WHEREAS, PRS remains committed to expanding its service delivery to all members of the community in need and strives to empower those individuals to become healthy, productive members of society; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commend PRS on the occasion of its 50th anniversary; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to PRS as an expression of the General Assembly's admiration for the organization's life-changing contributions to the Northern Virginia community.

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