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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 289

Offered February 20, 2020

Commending United Methodist Family Services.

Patrons—Reid, Adams, D.M., Bulova, Byron, Cole, M.L., Edmunds, Gilbert, Guy, Rasoul, Samirah, Sickles, Watts and Wright; Senators: Hashmi, Marsden, Reeves, Ruff, Saslaw and Stanley

WHEREAS, United Methodist Family Services, an organization that advocates for Virginia's children, teens, and families during some of their most difficult times, marked its 120th anniversary in 2020; and

WHEREAS, in 1900, the Virginia legislature granted a charter to the Virginia Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church to establish an orphanage in Richmond; this orphanage would later grow into the organization now known as United Methodist Family Services (UMFS); and

WHEREAS, flourishing in its early years as a farming community that included both the original Richmond location and a plot in New Kent County, the UMFS orphanage frequently admitted children whose families were unable to support them financially; and

WHEREAS, as families struggled through the Great Depression, the UMFS orphanage grew to house as many as 365 children; however, after the Social Security Act was enacted in 1935, families had greater access to public assistance and the number of children needing custodial care diminished; and

WHEREAS, in the 1950s, the orphanage consolidated at its Richmond location and became known as the Virginia Methodist Children's Home; at this time, children lived in cottages with house parents and attended public schools; and

WHEREAS, by 1980, the organization's Charterhouse School was built, and the organization was renamed shortly thereafter to United Methodist Family Services, conveying a shift in emphasis toward program goals that supported both children and their families; and

WHEREAS, over the next few decades, the UMFS extended into several locations throughout the Commonwealth, with offices or treatment centers opening in Northern Virginia, Tidewater, Fredericksburg, Farmville, and Centreville; and

WHEREAS, today, UMFS has locations in nine cities throughout the Commonwealth and offers nearly 20 programs for children and their families, including residential treatment centers, foster care and adoption programs, private day schools, and affordable-living apartments for seniors; and

WHEREAS, UMFS remains a leading provider of health and human services, regularly adapting its programs to incorporate evidence-based treatment models and meet the ever-changing needs of children, teens, and their families; and

WHEREAS, collaborating with a broad network of volunteers, donors, churches, community partners, and local and state providers, UMFS strives to ensure that every child and teen in the Commonwealth has a team of lifelong, unwavering champions and the tools necessary to grow into a resilient, successful adult; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commend United Methodist Family Services, an organization dedicated to supporting children, teens, and families in the Commonwealth, on the occasion of the organization's 120th anniversary; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to Greg Peters, president and chief executive officer of United Methodist Family Services, as an expression of the General Assembly's profound respect and admiration for the organization's service on behalf of the Commonwealth and its citizens.

INTRODUCED

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