

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 455

Commending Arlington County.

Agreed to by the House of Delegates, March 3, 2020
Agreed to by the Senate, March 5, 2020

WHEREAS, in 2020, Arlington County, one of the most prosperous counties in the United States, marks the 100th anniversary of the renaming of Alexandria County as Arlington County; and

WHEREAS, Arlington County traces its history to 1801, when part of Fairfax County that had been ceded to the federal government for the creation of Washington, D.C., was designated as Alexandria County; and

WHEREAS, Alexandria County was retroceded to Virginia in 1846, and after the Civil War, the county thrived as a suburb of Washington, D.C., thanks in large part to the introduction of a streetcar system in the late 1800s and the construction of the Washington and Old Dominion Railroad in the early 1900s; and

WHEREAS, to avoid confusion with the City of Alexandria, which had incorporated as an independent city in 1870, Alexandria County reorganized as Arlington County in 1920; the county took its new name from the birthplace of Robert E. Lee, the Arlington House, the grounds of which now serve as the site of Arlington National Cemetery; and

WHEREAS, Arlington County exercises the functions of both county and city government through its county manager plan and was the first county in the United States to adopt such a system; while Arlington County is geographically the smallest self-governing county in the United States, it ranks as one of the most populous counties in Virginia; and

WHEREAS, during World War II, the Henry G. Shirley Highway, now Interstate 395, was constructed in Arlington County, spurring further growth in the region, and after the war, the Pentagon was constructed on the former site of the region's original airport; and

WHEREAS, Arlington County was a pioneer in the school integration movement, announcing plans to integrate its public schools as early as 1956; Stratford Junior High School ultimately became the first public secondary school in the Commonwealth to racially integrate in February 1959; and

WHEREAS, Arlington County has taken an active role in transit planning in the region, and its work to prepare for the construction of the Washington Metro has become a model for revitalization of older suburbs throughout the country; and

WHEREAS, Arlington County has one of the highest median family income levels in the nation and consistently maintains the lowest unemployment rate of any locality in Virginia's economy; in addition to the Department of Defense at the Pentagon, numerous federal agencies are headquartered in the county and many national and international companies have relocated to or opened offices there; and

WHEREAS, in recognition of its visionary development programs, Arlington County received a 2002 National Award for Smart Growth Achievement from the Environmental Protection Agency; the county is home to several well-preserved historical resources, and many of its neighborhoods have enacted conservation plans to preserve the character and history of their communities; and

WHEREAS, with its rich history, vibrant cultural diversity, and economic vitality, Arlington County and its residents have made incalculable contributions to the Commonwealth and the United States; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commend Arlington County on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of the renaming of Alexandria County; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the Arlington County Board as an expression of the General Assembly's admiration for Arlington County's unique place in the history of the Commonwealth.

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