

## HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 210

*Commending Loudoun County wineries.*

Agreed to by the House of Delegates, March 7, 2020

WHEREAS, wine was first introduced to North America during European colonization, and within a few decades of the settlement of Jamestown in 1607, the House of Burgesses passed an act requiring all male colonists to plant and tend grapevines; John Smith subsequently documented that colonists had made 20 gallons of wine from grapes grown along the Virginia coast; and

WHEREAS, the early days of Virginia winemaking were extremely difficult, with attempts at growing wine grapes ending in failure due to disease, pests, and Virginia's climate; many colonists abandoned the pursuit of winemaking, believing that fine wine could only be produced in Europe; and

WHEREAS, Virginians did not give up hope on their wine, and by the end of the 17th century, many people had locally-produced wine stocked in their homes; and

WHEREAS, after Charles Carter proved that wine grapes could be grown successfully in Virginia, Thomas Jefferson set aside 2,000 acres near his Monticello estate to establish a vineyard in 1770, but his efforts at winemaking were again thwarted by Virginia's climate; and

WHEREAS, in the 19th century, winemakers found greater success by turning to the use of grapes native to America; in the 1820s, America's oldest wine grape, Norton, was first cultivated in Virginia, and wine made from Norton grapes was named the "best red wine of all nations" at the 1873 Vienna World's Fair, beginning a new era of Virginia winemaking; and

WHEREAS, Virginia's wine industry began to accelerate with the success of indigenous grapes and the discovery that native vines and European vines could be grafted together; and

WHEREAS, the passage of the Eighteenth Amendment to the Constitution of the United States and Prohibition brought Virginia's burgeoning wine industry to a standstill from 1919 to 1933; it wasn't until the late 1950s that Virginia's winemakers once again began experimenting with European grapes; and

WHEREAS, there were only six wineries in Virginia in 1979, but the industry enjoyed a renaissance in the 1980s and 1990s, growing to 46 by 1995; today, there are more than 300 wineries throughout the Commonwealth, the sixth most of any state in the nation, and Loudoun County is home to more wineries than any other Virginia locality; and

WHEREAS, Willowcroft Farm Vineyards, founded in 1984, was the first winery to open in Loudoun County; owner and winemaker Lew Parker is considered the pioneer of Loudoun winemaking and respected as a patriarch to a now very large winemaking family; and

WHEREAS, Loudoun County's own Breaux Vineyards has received numerous awards and accolades and has been voted "Favorite Winery in Virginia" for the past four years; and

WHEREAS, in 1982, the Virginia Governor's Cup wine competition was established to judge entries made from 100 percent Virginia fruit and remains one of the nation's most stringent wine competitions; and

WHEREAS, on February 25, 2020, Loudoun County's 868 Estate Vineyards was awarded the 2020 Governor's Cup for its 2017 Vidal Blanc Passito, the first award-winner made entirely from Loudoun County fruit; 868 Estate Vineyards was cofounded eight years ago by Peter and Nancy Deliso with Wendy Charron and winemaker Carl DiManno; and

WHEREAS, nine wines from Loudoun County wineries earned a Gold Medal for scoring 90 points or higher in the competition, and 21 Loudoun County wineries and vineyards overall received recognition in the 2020 competition; and

WHEREAS, Loudoun County's wineries have given stellar performances in many competitions and deserve praise for their hard work and ingenuity; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, That Loudoun County wineries hereby be commended for their legacy of contributions to winemaking and the economic vitality of Virginia; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to representatives of Loudoun County wineries as an expression of the House of Delegates' admiration for their exceptional achievements and service to generations of Virginia residents and visitors.

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