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SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 147

Offered February 24, 2020

Commending the Appalachian School of Law.

Patrons—Chafin and Pillion; Delegates: Austin, Campbell, J.L., Kilgore, Morefield, O'Quinn and Wampler

WHEREAS, the Appalachian School of Law was founded in 1997 in Grundy to provide a legal education to students from Buchanan County, Appalachia, and beyond; and

WHEREAS, the Appalachian School of Law has since granted juris doctor degrees to over 1,000 students, a majority of whom are from Appalachia, while contributing greatly to the economy of Buchanan County; and

WHEREAS, the Appalachian School of Law counts among its graduates 14 judges, five state legislators, and eight attorneys for the Commonwealth; and

WHEREAS, the Appalachian School of Law's students have completed over 223,000 hours of community service over the last 12 years; and

WHEREAS, the 29th and 30th Judicial Circuits, which include Buchanan County and the surrounding areas, have an attorney-to-person ratio that is the lowest in Virginia and less than half of the national average, indicating a critical need for more attorneys in the region; and

WHEREAS, graduates of the Appalachian School of Law make up 62 percent of the lawyers who began practicing in the 29th and 30th Judicial Circuits after the year 2000, increasing access to justice for the most underrepresented region of the Commonwealth; and

WHEREAS, the Appalachian School of Law has contributed to the 21 percent positive change in the attorney-to-person ratio in the counties surrounding the law school since it graduated its first class in the year 2000; and

WHEREAS, a majority of graduates of the Appalachian School of Law return to their communities in Appalachia to become lawyers and leaders, with more than 60 percent of alumni living within the boundaries of Appalachia as defined by the Appalachian Regional Commission; and

WHEREAS, the Appalachian School of Law plans to continue to fulfill its mission of educating lawyers in Appalachia and improving access to justice; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commend the Appalachian School of Law for providing an excellent legal education to thousands of students and for improving Appalachia's access to legal representation and justice; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the Honorable Elizabeth A. McClanahan, Dean of the Appalachian School of Law, as an expression of the General Assembly's admiration for the school's spirit and mission and best wishes for its continued success.

INTRODUCED

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