

2020 SESSION

ENROLLED

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 217

Commending the Turning Point Suffragist Memorial Association.

Agreed to by the Senate, March 4, 2020
Agreed to by the House of Delegates, March 7, 2020

WHEREAS, the Turning Point Suffragist Memorial in Fairfax County will be dedicated by the Turning Point Suffragist Memorial Association on August 26, 2020, in honor of the individuals who fought for the Nineteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution and women's right to vote; and

WHEREAS, the Turning Point Suffragist Memorial Association seeks to educate, inspire, and empower present and future generations so that they remain dedicated to the pursuit of liberty, freedom, and equal rights; and

WHEREAS, the Turning Point Suffragist Memorial will raise awareness of the centennial anniversary of the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment and the many suffrage events and names that are part of the movement's history; and

WHEREAS, the Turning Point Suffragist Memorial originated in 2008, when the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority, now NOVA Parks, offered the League of Women Voters of the Fairfax Area land for a suffrage memorial at Occoquan Regional Park in Fairfax County; and

WHEREAS, the Turning Point Suffragist Memorial will be built in Occoquan Regional Park because it contains part of the historic prison grounds where the infamous Occoquan Workhouse was located; and

WHEREAS, in the years leading up to passage of the Nineteenth Amendment, scores of suffragists, known as "Silent Sentinels" for their steadfast activism outside of the White House, were unjustly imprisoned at the Occoquan Workhouse, where they were subjected to grossly inhumane conditions and treatment; and

WHEREAS, when news of the Occoquan Workhouse reached the public, it galvanized interest in women's right to vote and became a "turning point" in the movement, an historic moment that is the inspiration for the Turning Point Suffragist Memorial; and

WHEREAS, unlike other heroes in the nation's struggle for freedom, no national monument celebrating the Occoquan Workhouse suffragists' extraordinary contributions to Virginia history has been established, a shortcoming the Turning Point Suffragist Memorial Association aims to address; and

WHEREAS, to tell the story of the many women who suffered at the Occoquan Workhouse for the right to vote, 19 education stations within the Turning Point Suffragist Memorial will recount the 72-year history of the suffrage movement, this decisive chapter, and other overlooked stories, such as the contributions of African American and Jewish leaders to the cause; and

WHEREAS, with the suffragists as role models and in conjunction with the Turning Point Suffragist Memorial Association, the Turning Point Institute will cultivate leadership and civic skills through a range of youth programs, including interactive presentations, webinars, camps, and mentorships; and

WHEREAS, by establishing a memorial that will educate future Virginians about the injustices of the past and inspire them to correct the inequities of the present, the Turning Point Suffragist Memorial Association has provided an invaluable service to the Commonwealth; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commend the Turning Point Suffragist Memorial Association for its dedication of the Turning Point Suffragist Memorial; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the Turning Point Suffragist Memorial Association as an expression of the General Assembly's profound respect and admiration for the organization's efforts to educate the public about the suffrage movement and its role in the history of the Commonwealth.

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