

20105506D

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 74

Offered January 16, 2020

Designating the Jamestown-Yorktown Foundation as the official executive branch agency to assist the Commonwealth in establishing planning systems for commemorating the 250th anniversary of the American Revolution and the independence of the United States of America.

Patrons—Howell, Mason and Norment

Referred to Committee on Rules

WHEREAS, created by the Virginia General Assembly in 1958, the Jamestown Foundation, now the Jamestown-Yorktown Foundation, is charged by the Code of Virginia with doing "all things necessary and proper to foster through its living-history museums, Jamestown Settlement and the American Revolution Museum at Yorktown, an awareness and understanding of the early history, settlement, and development of the United States through the convergence of American Indian, European, and African cultures and the enduring legacies bequeathed to the nation; . . . commemorate the winning of American independence on the battlefield at Yorktown; and enhance our understanding of the making of the United States Constitution and Bill of Rights, including the Commonwealth's role in shaping the fundamental principles of the American constitutional system"; and

WHEREAS, the American Revolutionary War occurred between 1775 and 1783, when the patriots in the 13 original colonies in North America, with the assistance of France, won independence from Great Britain and established the United States of America; and

WHEREAS, the 250th anniversary of the quest for American independence is imminent, with significant dates to be commemorated in the coming years, such as April 19, 2025, the 250th anniversary of the outbreak of the American Revolutionary War, with the first shots fired at Lexington and Concord, Massachusetts; October 19, 2031, signifying the 250th anniversary of the surrender of British Lord Cornwallis to General George Washington at Yorktown, Virginia, which effectively ended the war for independence; and September 3, 2033, marking the anniversary of the signing of the Treaty of Paris, officially ending the American Revolutionary War; and

WHEREAS, the Yorktown Victory Center, the forerunner to the American Revolution Museum at Yorktown, a world-class museum chronicling the story of the entire scope of the American Revolution, administered by the Jamestown-Yorktown Foundation and officially opened on April 1, 2017, was one of only three centers built in the Commonwealth to help commemorate the nation's bicentennial in 1976; the center played an integral role in the 1981 commemoration of the 200th anniversary of the surrender at Yorktown and was transformed into a museum of the American Revolution; and

WHEREAS, since its creation, the Jamestown-Yorktown Foundation has played a fundamental and vital role in assisting with special commemorations, including the 375th anniversary of the first legislative assembly in 1994; the 2007 quadricentennial of the founding of Jamestown through America's 400th Anniversary, 1607-2007; and the 400th anniversary of landmark events in Virginia's and the nation's history through American Evolution: Virginia to America, 1619-2019; and

WHEREAS, the Commonwealth has established under the Jamestown-Yorktown Foundation a subagency, Jamestown-Yorktown Commemorations, designated to support commemorations of such historic significance; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the Virginia General Assembly designate the Jamestown-Yorktown Foundation as the official executive branch agency to assist the Commonwealth in establishing planning systems for commemorating the 250th anniversary of the American Revolution and the independence of the United States of America; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That all agencies of the Commonwealth be authorized, consistent with the mission of the agency, to provide assistance and advice to the Jamestown-Yorktown Foundation in fulfilling all things necessary and proper to plan for and implement the commemoration of the 250th anniversary of the American Revolution and that the various agencies and institutions of the Commonwealth, upon request of the Foundation and approval of the respective agency head, designate a liaison to coordinate assistance and services to the Foundation from their agencies and institutions.

INTRODUCED

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