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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 677

Offered February 1, 2021

Commending the New River Valley Public Health Task Force.

Patron—Hurst

WHEREAS, the New River Valley Public Health Task Force, a collaborative consortium of government, health, education, business, law-enforcement, and community entities in the New River Valley, was established on March 11, 2020, to provide timely and effective guidance to the region's residents during the COVID-19 pandemic; and

WHEREAS, the New River Valley (NRV) Public Health Task Force was convened by Dr. Noelle Bissell, director of the New River Health District of the Virginia Department of Health, and Anthony Wilson, chief of the Blacksburg Police Department; and

WHEREAS, to enhance the New River Valley's response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the NRV Public Health Task Force incorporates the efforts of the region's localities; hospitals; universities; public school systems; law-enforcement, first responder, and community services agencies; the New River Valley Regional Commission; and the New River Health District of the Virginia Department of Health; and

WHEREAS, the NRV Public Health Task Force swiftly initiated drive-through testing, assessment, and referral sites, as well as onsite operations for area nursing homes, jails, and other facilities, administering more than 36,000 tests in its first six months of operation; and

WHEREAS, the NRV Public Health Task Force was instrumental in securing personal protective equipment for frontline health care workers and public safety personnel in the region, distributing more than 369,000 branded cloth masks to date; and

WHEREAS, by creating its NRV Business Continuity Team and "Working Safe Resource Guidebook," the NRV Public Health Task Force has supported the many small businesses and industries that are the lifeblood of the New River Valley; and

WHEREAS, the NRV Public Health Task Force held six virtual town halls, produced a series of podcasts, and operates a call center to address residents' questions and concerns regarding the COVID-19 pandemic and to encourage them to take the necessary precautions to stem this disease; and

WHEREAS, through its "Be committed. Be well." public health campaign, the NRV Public Health Task Force has connected with residents by way of videos, podcasts, social media, various signage, and advertising along local public transit systems, ensuring that all residents of the New River Valley are informed of what they can do to keep themselves and their loved ones safe during this historic crisis; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commend the New River Valley Public Health Task Force for its efforts to unify the New River Valley's response to the COVID-19 pandemic; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the New River Valley Public Health Task Force as an expression of the General Assembly's high esteem and admiration for the organization's achievements.

INTRODUCED

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