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## SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 517

Offered February 16, 2021

*Commending the Virginia Women's Institute for Leadership at Mary Baldwin University.*Patron—Hanger

WHEREAS, the Virginia Women's Institute for Leadership at Mary Baldwin University, the nation's only all-female corps of cadets, has supported and empowered women leaders for 25 years; and

WHEREAS, opened in 1995 with an inaugural class of 42 cadets under founding director Brenda Bryant, the Virginia Women's Institute for Leadership integrates academic studies, physical fitness, leadership development, ethics, and military training to graduate well-rounded citizens and military leaders; and

WHEREAS, the Virginia Corps of Cadets comprises cadets from Mary Baldwin University, Virginia Military Institute, and Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, with the Virginia Women's Institute for Leadership representing 30 percent of female cadets; and

WHEREAS, the Virginia Women's Institute for Leadership works with Virginia Military Institute to provide a coeducational Reserve Officers' Training Corps program, and upon graduation, cadets have the opportunity to earn a commission in any branch of the United States Armed Forces; and

WHEREAS, cadets of the Virginia Women's Institute for Leadership have marched in inaugural parades for five Virginia governors, and the school's color guard has presented the colors at numerous important national events; and

WHEREAS, the Virginia Women's Institute for Leadership band performed at the grand opening of the Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum's Steven F. Udvar-Hazy Center in Chantilly, and regularly marches in the Washington, D.C. and New York City St. Patrick's Day parades, and other regional events; and

WHEREAS, in its rich history, the Virginia Women's Institute for Leadership has benefited from the wisdom and guidance of two commandants, Brigadier General N. Michael Bissell and Brigadier General Terry Djuric; and

WHEREAS, the cadets and graduates of the Virginia Women's Institute for Leadership have earned countless awards and accolades, including a Bronze Star; graduates have served on the Presidential Honor Guard, in the security detail of the U.S. Secretary of State, and in other prominent postings; and

WHEREAS, in 2021, Kathleen Mahoney became the first Virginia Women's Institute for Leadership graduate to reach grade O-6, attaining the rank of captain in the United States Navy; and

WHEREAS, one graduate of the Virginia Women's Institute for Leadership has made the ultimate sacrifice while serving her country; Lieutenant Sarah Small, an Air Force public affairs officer, was killed in the line of duty in 2005; and

WHEREAS, the Virginia Women's Institute for Leadership will host a 25th anniversary parade on April 8, 2021; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate of Virginia, That the Virginia Women's Institute for Leadership at Mary Baldwin University hereby be commended on the occasion of its 25th anniversary; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the Virginia Women's Institute for Leadership at Mary Baldwin University as an expression of the Senate of Virginia's admiration for the institute's legacy of excellence and service to the Commonwealth and the United States.

INTRODUCED

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