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SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 34

Offered January 12, 2022

Prefiled January 11, 2022

Designating September, in 2022 and in each succeeding year, as African Diaspora Heritage Month in Virginia.

Patrons—McClellan; Delegate: Simon

Referred to Committee on Rules

WHEREAS, the Commonwealth is proud to be home to more than 115,000 Virginian members of the African Diaspora population; and

WHEREAS, the African Diaspora is the fastest-growing population of immigrants in the United States, with the number of African immigrants growing at a rate of almost 50 percent from 2010 to 2018; and

WHEREAS, thousands of African Diaspora Virginians are small and medium business owners, who have helped the Commonwealth become the best state in the country for business by making significant contributions to economic growth and job creation, as well as generating more than \$205 million in international trade; and

WHEREAS, the African Diaspora has a long and difficult past in Virginia, beginning in Jamestown in 1619 with "twenty and odd" Africans from Angola, but the African Diaspora has proved resilient and is essential to Virginia's growth and economic well-being; and

WHEREAS, African Diaspora Virginians have made significant contributions through their leadership and work in government, service in the military, and work to feed communities through agriculture; they have inspired children as educators, cared for individuals as health care professionals, and advanced society through achievements in science and technology; and

WHEREAS, African Diaspora immigrants from the Sub-Saharan and other regions of Africa have brought high levels of knowledge and education to the Commonwealth; and

WHEREAS, African Diaspora households contribute billions of dollars to the economy of the United States, with an estimated \$10.1 billion in federal taxes, \$4.7 billion in state and local taxes, and a spending power of more than \$40.3 billion in 2015; and

WHEREAS, in the fight for equality, there have been monumental strides in education equity, with the expansion of in-state tuition and access to state financial aid for many African Diaspora students, who had previously not had the opportunity to afford a quality education; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the General Assembly designate September, in 2022 and in each succeeding year, as African Diaspora Heritage Month in Virginia; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate transmit a copy of this resolution to the Virginia African Diaspora Committee so that members of the organization may be apprised of the sense of the General Assembly of Virginia in this matter; and, be it

RESOLVED FINALLY, That the Clerk of the Senate post the designation of this month on the General Assembly's website.

INTRODUCED

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