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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 627

Offered February 7, 2023

Commending Virginia CyberSlam.

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Patrons—Reid, Delaney, Gooditis, Murphy, Shin and Subramanyam; Senators: Bell, Boysko, Favola and Vogel

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WHEREAS, Virginia CyberSlam, an initiative to teach students of the Commonwealth more about cybersecurity and its applications in the world, held its second annual conference on January 9, 2023, at George Mason University; and

WHEREAS, CyberSlam was developed by Chris Starke, a cyber educator at Briar Woods High School in Ashburn, alongside Jen Marden of Loudoun County High School, and several other teachers in the area, who recognized that there were limited opportunities for students to engage with the field of cybersecurity; and

WHEREAS, after an impressive turnout of 175 students in its inaugural session, this year's CyberSlam drew 419 students from 22 high schools across five counties, who participated in four cybersecurity workshops and heard from leaders in the cybersecurity field, including Aliscia Andrews, Deputy Secretary of Homeland Security and the Assistant Homeland Security Advisor of the Commonwealth; and

WHEREAS, CyberSlam's four workshops were led by David Raymond, director of the Virginia Cyber Range and the U.S. Cyber Range; Chuck Gardner, senior director of government and nonprofit engagement for CYBER.org; Mary Kim from Raytheon Technologies with Riverside High School student Ishan Jadhwani; and Lord Fairfax Community College interim cybersecurity program lead Melissa Stange with George Mason University associate professor of cybersecurity engineering Henry Coffman; and

WHEREAS, CyberSlam's workshops gave students the opportunity to test their cybersecurity knowledge, experiment with cryptography and encryption, fly drones, attempt ethical hacking, and connect with cybersecurity professionals across a wide range of industries; and

WHEREAS, CyberSlam enabled students with an interest in cybersecurity to hone their skills and to envision the potential of a career in cybersecurity, a field that will prove vital to the defense of the Commonwealth and the nation for years to come; and

WHEREAS, CyberSlam was made possible through the vision of its founders, the remarkable efforts of the educators who organized the conference, and the generous support of George Mason University and local sponsors; and

WHEREAS, CyberSlam promises to have a positive and lasting impact on the next generation of cybersecurity professionals and is a shining example of why the Commonwealth is a leader in cybersecurity education; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commend Virginia CyberSlam on the occasion of its second annual conference; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare copies of this resolution for presentation to Chris Starke and Jen Marden, organizers of Virginia CyberSlam, as an expression of the General Assembly's admiration for their efforts and best wishes for their continued success.