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HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 307

Offered February 13, 2023

Commending the City of Virginia Beach.

Patrons—Convirs-Fowler, Knight, Tata, Anderson, Davis, Greenhalgh, Hayes and Williams Graves

WHEREAS, the City of Virginia Beach, the most populous city in the Commonwealth and a vibrant tourism destination, is a hub for culture, education, business, and national defense; and

WHEREAS, situated where the southern mouth of the Chesapeake Bay meets the Atlantic Ocean, Virginia Beach traces its deepest roots to the earliest days of the nation, with Cape Henry serving as the initial landing site in the New World for the Jamestown settlers; and

WHEREAS, from Colonial America through the founding of the United States to the Reconstruction Era, the area around what is now Virginia Beach remained largely rural, but with the arrival of the railroad in 1883, a resort community began to develop near the coast in Princess Anne County, and Virginia Beach was incorporated as a town in 1906; and

WHEREAS, Virginia Beach continued to grow and became a well-known seasonal vacation destination for families throughout the Commonwealth and the eastern United States; and

WHEREAS, Virginia Beach was incorporated as an independent city in 1952, but maintained strong ties with the surrounding Princess Anne County, and in 1963, residents of both localities passed a referendum to merge; and

WHEREAS, at the time, Virginia Beach was only about two square miles in area, and with the addition of the 253 square miles that represented Princess Anne County, the new city was divided into seven boroughs, then known as Bayside, Blackwater, Kempsville, Lynnhaven, Princess Anne, Pungo, and Virginia Beach; and

WHEREAS, tourism accounts for a significant share of Virginia Beach's vibrant economy, with millions of annual visitors accounting for billions of dollars in spending, which supports thousands of local jobs; Virginia Beach is listed in the Guinness World Records as the longest pleasure beach in the world, with 38 miles of coastline dedicated to outdoor recreation and family-friendly activities; and

WHEREAS, Virginia Beach also maintains a significant agribusiness sector and is home to a variety of industries, advanced manufacturers, and national and global corporations, as well as several United States military installations, including Naval Air Station Oceana; and

WHEREAS, Virginia Beach is home to Regent University and Virginia Wesleyan University, and offers numerous opportunities for educational and cultural enrichment through the Virginia Museum of Contemporary Art, the Virginia Aquarium and Marine Science Center, and the Military Aviation Museum, among other shows and venues; and

WHEREAS, Virginia Beach has preserved the history and heritage of the Commonwealth and the United States as the location of 18 sites on the National Register of Historic Places, including one of the oldest surviving colonial homes in Virginia, the Adam Thoroughgood House, and the Cape Henry Lighthouses; and

WHEREAS, Virginia Beach supports conservation of the Commonwealth's valuable natural resources; within city limits, there are more than 210 city parks, two state parks, and the Back Bay National Wildlife Refuge; and

WHEREAS, to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the creation of the modern incarnation of Virginia Beach, Mayor Bobby Dyer launched the Helping Our People Excel (H.O.P.E.) Initiative to recognize individuals, civic organizations, and religious groups that have enhanced community life in the city through their generosity and commitment to service; and

WHEREAS, Virginia Beach has reimagined the city's branding and developed a commemorative 60th anniversary logo and media toolkit for local businesses and organizations; city agencies also have a wide range of special events and activities to celebrate the landmark year; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, That the City of Virginia Beach hereby be commended on the occasion of the 60th anniversary of the city's merger with the former Princess Anne County; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to representatives of the Virginia Beach community as an expression of the House of Delegates' admiration for the incredible contributions by the City of Virginia Beach to the heritage, culture, and economic vitality of the Commonwealth.

INTRODUCED

HR307