

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 275

Commending the City of Manassas.

Agreed to by the Senate, January 26, 2023
Agreed to by the House of Delegates, January 30, 2023

WHEREAS, the City of Manassas and its residents will celebrate the city's historic 150th anniversary as an active and involved community on April 1, 2023, at Dean Park; and

WHEREAS, originally called Manassas Junction and located at the intersection of the Orange and Alexandria and Manassas Gap railroad lines, the Town of Manassas was incorporated in 1873 by the General Assembly, and its first law-enforcement officer, Jacob W. Hornbaker, was named town sergeant the same year; and

WHEREAS, a strategic location for growth after the Civil War, Manassas was later selected to serve as the county seat of Prince William County, and the construction of the county courthouse in 1894 spurred a building and population boom that would further the development of the town; and

WHEREAS, seven of Manassas' historic treasures are listed on the National Register of Historic Places, including Liberia plantation, Mayfield Earthwork Fort, Cannon Branch Fort, Annaburg Manor, the iconic 1914 Manassas Water Tower, the nationally recognized site of the Manassas Industrial School for Colored Youth, and the Manassas Local Historic District, which includes 300 architecturally and historically significant structures both downtown and in the surrounding neighborhoods; and

WHEREAS, the Manassas Volunteer Fire Company, the first fire company in Manassas and Prince William County, was founded in 1892 to improve community safety; in 1914, the first fire station was built, which later relocated to its current location at 9322 Centreville Road; and

WHEREAS, in 1895, telephone service was established in Manassas to support the needs of the blossoming town and 18 years later the first electricity was generated and run by the municipality; and

WHEREAS, in 1905, a horrendous fire swept through Manassas and burned approximately 30 buildings; afterwards, these buildings were reconstructed and by town ordinance were built with brick and fire-resistant materials; and

WHEREAS, the first Greater Manassas Christmas Parade, which is today one of the largest Christmas parades in the area, was held in 1945; and

WHEREAS, the first airport in Manassas was established in 1930 and the Manassas Regional Airport, which is currently the busiest General Aviation Airport in the Commonwealth with over 400 based aircraft and more than \$275 million in economic benefit generated for the surrounding region, opened at its current location in 1964; and

WHEREAS, in 1964, using funds from donations by the community, what is now the UVA Prince William Medical Center was established to aid in the health care of Manassas area residents; and

WHEREAS, the visionary town council of Manassas passed an ambitious \$5 million bond referendum to purchase land on Broad Run in order to construct a dam that would ultimately create the Lake Manassas reservoir in 1969, providing a dedicated water supply to Manassas and Prince William County; and

WHEREAS, as early as 1897, town father George Carr Round recognized the strength of Manassas' diverse population and its newcomers, writing of the town, "It is especially cosmopolitan"; today, the city is one of the most diverse localities in the Commonwealth, with more than 27 different languages represented by the students and families served by Manassas City Public Schools; and

WHEREAS, Manassas is a regional employment center, and its robust history of major corporate investment and job creation includes IBM notably opening a new facility in the locality in the late 1960s and Micron Technologies, Inc., recently making one of the largest capital investments in the history of the Commonwealth; and

WHEREAS, the Manassas Museum opened in its first location in 1974 to document and display Manassas' history and culture and to provide free cultural exhibits to residents and visitors alike; and

WHEREAS, with a population of 12,800 people, Manassas became an independent city in 1975, making it one of only 41 independent cities in the United States at the time; and

WHEREAS, the Virginia Railway Express began operations in Manassas on June 22, 1992, improving residents' access to Northern Virginia and Washington, D.C.; and

WHEREAS, the Loy E. Harris Pavilion in Manassas was completed in 2000 and has since grown to become the leading event center for the area, hosting concerts and more throughout the year; and

WHEREAS, Manassas' leaders adopted the logo and tagline "Historic Heart. Modern Beat." in 2015 and the promotional campaign has since been heartily embraced by the community; and

WHEREAS, the Manassas City Police Department is one of the most highly accredited departments

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in the country, having recently received a gold standard with excellence accreditation from the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement; and

WHEREAS, Manassas has grown from a city of 12,800 people in 1975 into a 10-square-mile city of more than 43,000 people in 2023, close to the urban amenities of Washington, D.C., but with the comfort and feel of a small town; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commend the City of Manassas on the occasion of its 150th anniversary; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the mayor of the City of Manassas, Michelle Davis-Younger, and the Manassas City Council as an expression of the General Assembly's congratulations on 150 years as a community.