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SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 380

Offered February 20, 2023

Commending Richmond Public Library.

Patrons—McClellan, Hashmi and Spruill; Delegates: Bagby, Bourne, Clark, McQuinn, Mundon King, Rasoul and Willett

WHEREAS, Richmond Public Library, an institution dedicated to increasing access to information and promoting literacy for the benefit of the residents of Richmond, celebrated its 100th anniversary in 2022; and

WHEREAS, on November 16, 1922, the Richmond City Council passed an ordinance for a bond issue of \$200,000 to support the creation of a public library for all; and

WHEREAS, the first physical location of the Richmond Public Library opened on October 13, 1924, at 901 W. Franklin Street, with an inventory composed of family libraries and other collections that had been donated to the institution; and

WHEREAS, in July 1925, what would be named the Rosa D. Bowser Branch Library of the Richmond Public Library opened at the YWCA on N. 7th Street to provide Black Richmonders with access to books and other reading materials; and

WHEREAS, what would become known as the Main Library of Richmond Public Library opened in 1930 at the corner of 1st Street and Franklin Street with the support of philanthropist Sallie May Dooley; the site would then undergo a major expansion beginning in 1967 and was reopened to the public on September 15, 1972; and

WHEREAS, Richmond Public Library extended its reach into the neighborhoods of Richmond through the development of new branches, including the Belmont branch in 1956, the Westover Hills branch in 1959, the Ginter Park branch in 1964, the East End branch in 1965, the Broad Rock branch in 1977, the West End branch in 1978, the North Avenue branch in 1983, and the Hull Street branch in 1987; and

WHEREAS, Richmond Public Library has deployed innovative strategies over the years to improve its ability to serve the residents of Richmond, including the use of bookmobiles and kiosks to make access to materials more convenient for patrons; and

WHEREAS, the Main Library and eight branches of the Richmond Public Library underwent modernizing renovations between 2002 and 2017, enhancing the capacity for these locations to offer programs and classes, event space, free wireless internet access, public computers, and other services to support the residents of Richmond; and

WHEREAS, with a new strategic plan in place that focuses on accessibility, early literacy, lifelong learning, and organizational strength, among other priorities, Richmond Public Library is poised to enjoy another century successfully serving the Richmond community; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commend Richmond Public Library on the occasion of its 100th anniversary; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to Richmond Public Library as an expression of the General Assembly's admiration for the institution's history and its contributions to the Commonwealth.

INTRODUCED

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