

# 1996 SESSION

INTRODUCED

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## HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 343

Offered February 27, 1996

*Expressing the sense of the General Assembly concerning hate crimes and acts of bigotry.*

Patrons—Hall, Bloxom, Callahan, Cantor, Cox, Cunningham, Diamonstein, Drake, Forbes, Guest, Howell, Jones, D.C., McClure, McEachin, Murphy, Nixon, Purkey, Reid, Rhodes, Tata, Wardrup, Watkins and Weatherholtz

Consent to introduce

Referred to Committee on Rules

WHEREAS, the Virginia Statute of Religious Freedom was enacted by the Virginia General Assembly in 1786 to ensure the free expression of religious beliefs in the Commonwealth; and

WHEREAS, Virginians decry all acts of bigotry and hatred; and

WHEREAS, acts of bigotry, hatred, and violence against any particular people of faith threaten the freedoms cherished by the citizens of this great Commonwealth; and

WHEREAS, recently, acts of violence were committed in Richmond against Keneseth Beth Israel, the Glorious Church of God and Christ, the Metropolitan Community Church, Temple Beth El, and the Young Israel of Richmond Synagogue; and

WHEREAS, all people should recognize that tolerance for others' beliefs and respect for others' opinions are the ingredients for peace; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the Virginia General Assembly condemns the acts of bigotry and hatred perpetrated against these religious institutions and the people of faith they represent; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Virginia General Assembly deplores the acts of bigotry, hatred, violence, and intolerance, reaffirms its commitment to religious freedom and equality, and urges that state and federal laws prohibiting such acts be aggressively enforced; and be it

RESOLVED FINALLY, That the Virginia General Assembly urge the citizens of the Commonwealth to abide by the laws of the Commonwealth and this nation to ensure that the rights and privileges of all persons are respected and protected and that peace and tranquillity prevail.

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