

1996 SESSION

ENROLLED

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 343

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

Agreed to by the House of Delegates, March 1, 1996

Agreed to by the Senate, March 6, 1996

WHEREAS, the Virginia Statute of Religious Freedom was enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia 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 General Assembly of Virginia condemn 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 General Assembly of Virginia deplore the acts of bigotry, hatred, violence, and intolerance, reaffirm its commitment to religious freedom and equality, and urge that state and federal laws prohibiting such acts be aggressively enforced; and, be it

RESOLVED FINALLY, That the General Assembly of Virginia 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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