

1997 SESSION

INTRODUCED

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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 741

Offered February 12, 1997

Commending Providence Presbyterian Church.

Patron—Dickinson

Consent to introduce

WHEREAS, Providence Presbyterian Church in Gum Spring is the oldest frame Presbyterian church in continuous use in the Commonwealth; and

WHEREAS, founded 250 years ago, Providence Presbyterian Church was built in the early 1740s and used as a meeting house until Samuel Morris journeyed to Williamsburg and secured the permission of Governor Gooch for the parishioners to worship as Presbyterians; and

WHEREAS, Samuel Davies was sent by the Presbytery of New Castle, Delaware, to minister to the new flock in Virginia, and his oratory affected many, including a young Patrick Henry, who later acknowledged Davies' influence on his oratorical skills; and

WHEREAS, the second pastor of Providence Presbyterian Church, John Todd, led the church for 41 years and headed a classical school for boys nearby that was attended by James Madison and James Monroe, both of whom probably also heard Todd's sermons at the church; and

WHEREAS, John Williamson, a friend of both Samuel Davies and John Todd, willed to Providence Presbyterian Church two silver cups, which have been used during every communion at the church for over 200 years; and

WHEREAS, from these historically rich antecedents, Providence Presbyterian Church has provided a sanctuary for worship during every war in which Virginia has played a part, beginning with the French and Indian Wars; and

WHEREAS, for 250 years, a group of faithful parishioners has always been available to keep open the doors of Providence Presbyterian Church, a monument to faith, history, and the importance of worship; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commend Providence Presbyterian Church on the occasion of its 250th anniversary; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to Providence Presbyterian Church as an expression of the General Assembly's congratulations on achieving this milestone anniversary.

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