

992517362

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 795

Offered January 21, 1999

Commending the City of Alexandria on its 250th anniversary.

Patrons—Moran, Albo, Almand, Baskerville, Behm, Brink, Deeds, Hull, Joannou, Marshall, McQuigg, Plum, Puller, Rollison, Scott, Van Landingham and Williams; Senators: Colgan, Saslaw, Ticer and Whipple

WHEREAS, Captain John Smith and a party of explorers from Jamestown first visited the site that was to become Alexandria in 1608; and

WHEREAS, a tobacco warehouse was established in 1730 at the foot of Oronoco Street in what is now Alexandria, and a settlement informally called Hunting Creek Warehouse grew up around the warehouse; and

WHEREAS, a group of Scottish merchants tried to name the area Belhaven in 1749; and

WHEREAS, the General Assembly, upon petition of other local residents, voted on May 11, 1749, to establish a new town called Alexandria, named after the Alexander family on whose land the town was to be built; and

WHEREAS, the town was created by local landowners and Scottish merchants, with the first auction of town lots occurring on July 13 and 14, 1749; and

WHEREAS, Alexandria was the site of the adoption of the Fairfax Resolves in July of 1774 and the home town of Commander in Chief of the Continental Army and first President of the United States George Washington; and

WHEREAS, Alexandria was also the home of George Mason, author of the Virginia Bill of Rights and father of the federal Bill of Rights; and

WHEREAS, George Washington, his brother Lawrence Washington, George Mason, John Carlyle, George William Fairfax, George Johnson, and Thomas, Sixth Lord Fairfax, were among the early trustees appointed to the Alexandria Town Council; and

WHEREAS, Alexandria has been home to many of the most prominent people in the nation's history, including Generals Light-Horse Harry Lee and Robert E. Lee, former Presidents Richard M. Nixon and Gerald R. Ford, U.S. Supreme Court Justice Hugo Black, World War II General Carl A. "Toohey" Spaatz, labor leader John L. Lewis, several Lords Fairfax, composer Richard Bales, musicians Jim Morrison, "Mama" Cass, and Mary Chapin Carpenter, as well as many Cabinet officers over the past 250 years; and

WHEREAS, Alexandria was ceded to the United States to form part of the District of Columbia in 1791, and at the request of its citizens, was ceded back to Virginia in 1846; and

WHEREAS, Alexandria was the site in 1939 of a sit-in demonstration at the Alexandria Public Library, in which the participants demanded equal rights of use for black and white customers, and this is believed to be the first such sit-in in America; and

WHEREAS, Alexandria is the site of the Alexandria Academy, which had among its three schools the Free School, established by George Washington's contribution of 50 pounds annually to educate 20 boys and girls whose parents could not pay tuition and which was the site of a school for children of freedmen from 1812 to 1823; and

WHEREAS, Alexandria is the home of institutions of higher learning, including the Northern Virginia Community College and branches of Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University and the George Washington University; and

WHEREAS, Alexandria has many noteworthy museums, historic sites, and tourist attractions, including the internationally renowned Torpedo Factory Arts Center, one of the highest concentrations of 18th and early 19th century buildings in the nation, and a rich and active cultural life; and

WHEREAS, Alexandria retains the prominent role it has played since 1749 as a transportation center, by sea, road, and rail; and

WHEREAS, the City of Alexandria will mark its 250th anniversary throughout 1999 with a year-long series of diverse programs, activities, and public events; and

WHEREAS, all residents of Alexandria can look back with pride on their city's rich history and look forward with anticipation to an exciting and challenging future; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly commend the City of Alexandria 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 the Honorable Kerry J. Donley, mayor of the City of Alexandria, as an expression of the General Assembly's congratulations and best wishes for a glorious anniversary celebration.

INTRODUCED

HJ795