

1999 SESSION

INTRODUCED

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SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 441

Offered January 21, 1999

Commending Washington and Lee University.

Patrons—Reynolds; Delegates: Baker, Deeds, Griffith, Jones, J.C., Putney and Tate

WHEREAS, Washington and Lee University, one of the nation's finest small, liberal arts universities and an institution steeped in history and tradition, celebrates its 250th anniversary in 1999; and

WHEREAS, founded in 1749 as Augusta Academy, the school was chartered to grant degrees by the General Assembly in 1782, and was rescued in 1796 by George Washington, who endowed the school with \$20,000 in James River Canal stock; and

WHEREAS, the school was shortly thereafter renamed Washington Academy, and George Washington's gift, part of Washington and Lee's endowment, continues to pay part of the tuition of today's students; and

WHEREAS, immediately following the end of the Civil War, General Robert E. Lee was offered the presidency of Washington Academy, and, reluctant at first, he gradually became one of the most important leaders in the school's history; and

WHEREAS, Lee Chapel, declared in 1961 a National Historic Landmark, was constructed during Lee's tenure at Washington Academy, and it was there that he worshipped and it is there that he and his family are interred; and

WHEREAS, during his presidency, Robert E. Lee merged the Lexington School of Law with the college, encouraged the development of the sciences, and instituted programs in business instruction that led to the creation of the School of Commerce in 1906; and

WHEREAS, following Lee's death in 1870, the school became Washington and Lee University; and

WHEREAS, perhaps Robert E. Lee's most lasting legacy is Washington and Lee's Honor Code, completely administered by the students, and based on Lee's famous response to a request for a copy of the school rules: "We have but one rule here, and it is that every student must be a gentleman"; and

WHEREAS, growth and change continued to characterize Washington and Lee University throughout the 20th century, with women first admitted to the law school in 1972 and to the undergraduate program in 1985; and

WHEREAS, among Washington and Lee's graduates are four U.S. Supreme Court justices, 27 U.S. Senators, 31 Governors, and 65 U.S. Congressmen, along with countless others who have distinguished themselves as writers, artists, scientists, and business executives; and

WHEREAS, with a beautiful campus in Lexington, some 1,600 undergraduates from all 50 states and 27 foreign countries, an enviable student-faculty ratio of 10 to 1, and a legacy that includes the notable contributions of two of the most significant figures in American history, Washington and Lee University now sits firmly among the elite liberal arts colleges in the nation; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commend and congratulate Washington and Lee University on the occasion of its 250th anniversary; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to John W. Elrod, president of Washington and Lee University, as an expression of the General Assembly's admiration and respect for the rich past, successful present, and promising future of Washington and Lee University.

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