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SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 404

Offered January 15, 2003

Supporting the establishment of the Lorton Workhouse Arts Center at the former D.C. Prison Facility on Route 123 in Lorton, Virginia.

Patrons—O'Brien; Delegate: Albo

Referred to Committee on Rules

WHEREAS, in 2001 the Lorton Arts Foundation (LAF) was incorporated as a voluntary, grassroots nonprofit organization in order to preserve, promote, and support the arts in Lorton, Fairfax, and neighboring counties and the Commonwealth through its development of a dynamic creative and heritage arts campus, which will be sustained by a public-private partnership and be known as "The Lorton Workhouse Arts Center"; and

WHEREAS, the federal government has recommended that some of the buildings at the former Lorton Workhouse Correctional Facility be restored and preserved in a historic district where they "should be adaptively reused to ensure that these resources are adequately conserved and protected"; and

WHEREAS, Fairfax County has determined that the Workhouse has significant value as an architectural and cultural landmark due to the historic nature of the former prison facility and several important heritage events that occurred on or around the former Lorton Federal Reservation relating to the Revolutionary, Civil, and Cold Wars as well as pivotal activities in the nation's struggle for civil and human rights, such as the 1917 imprisonment of suffragists in their fight for the 19th Amendment; and

WHEREAS, with active studios, galleries, museums, performance spaces, and special events, the Lorton Workhouse Arts Center will become a premier platform for presenting the best of regional culture and history, serve as a living cultural museum, and create an active educational and community center for the residents of Fairfax County and beyond; and

WHEREAS, the Congressman representing Virginia's Eleventh Congressional District has offered legislation in the Congress of the United States to support funding for building renovations at the former Lorton Prison for a creative arts center and the LAF is actively pursuing private funds, foundation grants, and in-kind contributions for the Workhouse project; and

WHEREAS, the LAF includes entrepreneurs, professional artists, performers and musicians, community activists, museum experts, historians, the artistic director of George Mason University's professional theater company plus scores of Friends of LAF who are dedicated to the success of the Workhouse project; and

WHEREAS, if the Lorton Workhouse Arts Center is established in the Commonwealth, its presence will attract additional tourists, scholars, and business visitors to Virginia; create jobs for its residents; advance Fairfax County's vision for reuse of the former prison property in ways that benefit the entire community; and support Virginia's role in the protection and advancement of the United States' survival as a nation and of its citizens' rights as a free and prosperous people; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the General Assembly express its support for the establishment of the Lorton Workhouse Arts Center at the former D.C. Prison Facility in Lorton, Virginia; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate transmit copies of this resolution to the Lorton Arts Foundation, the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors, and the members of the Virginia Congressional Delegation in order that they may be apprised of the sense of the General Assembly of Virginia in this matter.

INTRODUCED

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