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SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 438

Offered January 18, 2007

Commending the Virginia Institute of Autism on the occasion of its 10th anniversary.

Patrons—Deeds; Delegates: Bell and Toscano

WHEREAS, the Virginia Institute of Autism in Charlottesville celebrated its 10th anniversary on October 20, 2006; and

WHEREAS, the Virginia Institute of Autism was co-founded in 1996 by four parents, Donna and David Cattell-Gordon and Alison and Bernard Webb, who received diagnoses of autism for their children and found limited resources to help them; and

WHEREAS, the Virginia Institute of Autism was established "to provide comprehensive, outcome-based education to people with autism; to support families coping with the challenges that come with autism; and to support primary research, advocacy and training in educating people with autism"; and

WHEREAS, the Virginia Institute of Autism has grown from a small, grassroots organization into a model for evidence-based practice for other schools throughout Virginia, a center for outreach and a vital resource to families struggling with the challenges of autism; and

WHEREAS, in 2001 and through the generosity of its supporters, the Virginia Institute of Autism moved to its campus at 1414 Westwood Road, giving the organization needed space for programmatic growth and the ability to serve more families; and

WHEREAS, the Virginia Institute of Autism established its *Shaping the Future* workshop program, through which hundreds of educators and parents throughout the Commonwealth and region have been trained in educating individuals with autism; and

WHEREAS, the Virginia Institute of Autism hosted two major conferences with internationally respected speakers in the field of autism; and

WHEREAS, the Virginia Institute of Autism launched a home-based early intervention program for toddlers and preschoolers, and has trained or consulted with teachers from school districts from Southside Virginia to Northern Virginia; and

WHEREAS, the Virginia Institute of Autism successfully partnered with the University of Virginia Children's Hospital to bring to Central Virginia a Center for Disease Control-initiated national public awareness campaign on early diagnosis and intervention, reaching more than 600 physicians and daycare providers; and

WHEREAS, the Virginia Institute of Autism has changed the lives of children and families with generous financial support from its community, and through partnerships with the Commonwealth of Virginia, local government agencies, public schools and the medical profession; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the General Assembly commend the Virginia Institute of Autism on the occasion of its 10th anniversary; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the Virginia Institute of Autism as an expression of the General Assembly's appreciation for its immeasurable service to children with autism and their families throughout the Commonwealth with congratulations on its joyful anniversary celebration.

INTRODUCED

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