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SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 132

Offered January 21, 2008

Commemorating the 250th anniversary of the birth of James Monroe.

Patron—Stuart

WHEREAS, April 28, 2008, is the 250th anniversary of the birth of James Monroe, a founding father of our nation, a revered Virginia statesman, and the fifth president of the United States; and

WHEREAS, James Monroe was born on April 28, 1758, in Westmoreland County, the second of five children of Spence and Elizabeth Jones Monroe, "small planters" who raised tobacco on their 600-acre farm; and

WHEREAS, James Monroe was educated at Parson Campbell's school in Westmoreland County, and he studied law under the tutelage of Thomas Jefferson at The College of William and Mary in Williamsburg; and

WHEREAS, James Monroe fought with the Continental Army in the American Revolutionary War, earning recognition from General George Washington as "a brave and active officer"; and

WHEREAS, the 18-year-old James Monroe crossed the Delaware River with General Washington in December 1776, was wounded at the Battle of Trenton, and camped the next winter at Valley Forge; he retired from the army as a lieutenant colonel; and

WHEREAS, in 1782, at the age of 24, James Monroe's 50 years of public service began with his election to the Virginia General Assembly as a member of the House of Delegates; and

WHEREAS, as a young politician, James Monroe joined the anti-Federalists in the Virginia Convention, where he helped ratify the Constitution of the United States of America; and

WHEREAS, James Monroe served in the Continental Congress from 1783 to 1786; and in 1790, he was elected to represent the Commonwealth as a United States Senator; and

WHEREAS, James Monroe was twice minister to France and once to both Britain and Spain; he served four one-year terms as Governor of Virginia and became President James Madison's Secretary of State and Secretary of War during the War of 1812; and

WHEREAS, during his tenure from 1794 to 1796 as the United States' minister to France, James Monroe, along with Robert R. Livingston, utilized his understanding of foreign policy and his powerful skills of persuasion to negotiate the Louisiana Purchase; and

WHEREAS, James Monroe served as the fifth president of the United States from 1817 to 1825, during which time he signed the "Missouri Compromise," barring slavery in territories north and west of Missouri, as well as "The Monroe Doctrine," which denounced European intervention and colonization in the Western Hemisphere; and

WHEREAS, President James Monroe and his wife, Elizabeth Kortright Monroe of New York, owned Highland, now known as Ash Lawn-Highland, in Charlottesville from 1793 to 1826 and made it their official residence from 1799 to 1823; after the Monroes' death, the name of their farm was changed from "Highland" to "Ash Lawn"; and

WHEREAS, when his presidency ended on March 4, 1825, James Monroe lived at Monroe Hill, his family farm located on the grounds of the University of Virginia that he donated to the university during his first term as president; he served on the university's board of visitors under Thomas Jefferson and subsequent rectors for many years; and

WHEREAS, James Monroe was a revered statesman in both Virginia and United States politics, and as a prominent figure in American history, he has left behind a substantial legacy as one of the nation's greatest and most important leaders; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commemorate the 250th anniversary of the birth of James Monroe; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to George W. Thomas, Jr., the president of the James Monroe Foundation, as an expression of the General Assembly's admiration for the organization's many efforts to promote patriotism and educate citizens about the achievements and sacrifices of our nation's forefathers.

INTRODUCED

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