

099230552

## HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 69

Offered February 27, 2009

*Commending the Vietnamese Boat People.*

Patrons—Hull and Ebbin

WHEREAS, the Vietnamese Boat People are refugees from Communist-controlled Vietnam who sought asylum in other countries following the Vietnam War by escaping by sea in boats or by land across Cambodia, Laos, and Thailand to settle in refugee camps in Thailand; and

WHEREAS, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees has declared that 840,000 Vietnamese Boat People arrived as refugees in Hong Kong, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, and Thailand; over 755,000 were resettled in western countries; and over 81,000 were deported to Vietnam; and

WHEREAS, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees estimates that over 250,000 Boat People died at sea as a result of storms, illness, and starvation, as well as kidnappings and killings; and

WHEREAS, over two million Boat People and their families are now spread across the world in Australia, Canada, China, England, France, Germany, Hong Kong, Japan, South Korea, the Philippines, and the United States, including many in Virginia; and

WHEREAS, Vietnamese Americans make up about half of all overseas Vietnamese and are the fourth largest Asian-American group in the United States, and in 2006, 72 percent were naturalized United States citizens, the highest rate among all Asian-American groups; and

WHEREAS, according to a 2008 study by the Manhattan Institute, Vietnamese Americans have among the highest rates of assimilation in the culture and economy of the United States; and

WHEREAS, Vietnamese Americans rank among the most successful socio-economic groups in the United States, pursuing many careers and professions and owning numerous businesses; and

WHEREAS, Vietnamese Americans have run for political office, winning seats on local governing bodies and school boards, in state legislatures in California and Texas, and in the Congress, where, in 2008 Joseph Cao of Louisiana became the first Vietnamese American elected to the House of Representatives; and

WHEREAS, the Asian Division of the Library of Congress, the Voice of Vietnamese-Americans, Boat People SOS, and the National Congress of Vietnamese-Americans will sponsor a Boat People Retrospective Symposium on May 2, 2009, which will be held at the Library of Congress to document their harrowing experiences, their subsequent achievements, and to honor the host countries that welcomed the Boat People; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, That the Vietnamese Boat People hereby be commended on the occasion of Vietnamese Boat People Day on May 2, 2009, in order to commemorate the arrival of the Boat People to Virginia and to recognize the volunteer agencies and nongovernmental organizations that facilitated their resettlement, adjustment, and assimilation into American society; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to representatives of Boat People SOS and the National Congress of Vietnamese-Americans as an expression of the respect and admiration the House of Delegates has for the Vietnamese Boat People.

INTRODUCED

HR69