

## 2009 SESSION

INTRODUCED

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### SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 303

Offered January 14, 2009

Prefiled January 7, 2009

*Designating 2009 as the Year of Astronomy in Virginia.*

Patron—Watkins

Referred to Committee on Rules

WHEREAS, astronomy, one of the oldest basic sciences, has contributed and still contributes fundamentally to the development of other sciences and applications in a wide range of fields; and

WHEREAS, astronomical observations have profound implications for the development of science, philosophy, culture, and the general conception of the universe; and

WHEREAS, each society has developed its own legends, myths, and traditions concerning the sky, the planets, and the stars, which have helped form the cultural heritage of its people; and

WHEREAS, the year 2009 marks the 400th anniversary of the first time the telescope was used by the great scientist Galileo to view the heavens; and

WHEREAS, the United Nations has declared the year 2009 as the International Year of Astronomy, holding opening ceremonies and exhibits at the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization Headquarters in Paris; and

WHEREAS, the first astronomical observatory in the United States was established in Virginia in 1823 by Thomas Jefferson; and

WHEREAS, the Commonwealth is host to two National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) facilities, and cutting edge astronomical research is conducted by NASA and other Virginia astronomers; and

WHEREAS, Virginia has numerous astronomy associations, planetariums, and observatories, where amateur and professional astronomers alike may study, monitor, and explore the heavens; and

WHEREAS, during the 2009 celebration of astronomy, all Virginians are encouraged to enjoy, preserve, and appreciate the beautiful natural resource of the Commonwealth's clear, dark, night skies, as well as to visit and support public observatories, planetariums, and astronomy exhibits; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the General Assembly designate 2009 as the Year of Astronomy in Virginia; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate post the designation of 2009 as the Year of Astronomy in Virginia on the General Assembly's website.

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