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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 165

Offered January 11, 2012

Prefiled January 11, 2012

*Commending WETA on the occasion of its 50th anniversary.*

Patron—Scott, J.M.

WHEREAS, public broadcasting station WETA, headquartered in Arlington, celebrates 50 years of broadcasting quality programs to the greater Washington metropolitan area and producing and coproducing landmark public television series; and

WHEREAS, founded in 1961 by Elizabeth P. Campbell, a pioneering force who believed that public television could play a pivotal role in educating viewers and creating a community of engaged citizens, WETA launched its first broadcast on October 2, 1961; and

WHEREAS, WETA originally held its production facilities in a classroom at Yorktown High School before moving to a renovated gym at Howard University, which housed the studio until 1972, when it moved to its present-day state-of-the-art facility in the Shirlington neighborhood of Arlington; and

WHEREAS, one of the top producing stations for public television, WETA has produced or coproduced such national treasures as *The NewsHour with Jim Lehrer*, *Washington Week with Gwen Ifill*, *The Kennedy Center Presents*, *National Journal*, Ken Burns' *The Civil War*, and, in 1973 the Senate Watergate hearings; and

WHEREAS, in 1970 WETA expanded its offerings, launching WETA 90.9 FM, a classical, jazz, and folk music station that also featured news coverage, and later, the National Public Radio program *All Things Considered*; and

WHEREAS, WETA has continued to grow and adapt to changing technology over the years, broadcasting its first HDTV production in 1997 and multicasting over the air and through Comcast digital cable service WETA Prime, WETA Kids, WETA Plus, and WETA HD Showcase in 2002; and

WHEREAS, in 2006 WETA began a series of fascinating original local productions that introduced viewers to the people and places that influenced the history of local neighborhoods on WETA *Neighborhoods*; and

WHEREAS, WETA has continued to reach out to its listening audience, changing WETA 90.9 FM to an all-classical format in 2007 and introducing an all-vocal classical station, VivaLaVoce, online and via HD2 signal in 2010; and

WHEREAS, WETA has garnered more than 500 awards over the course of its history, including Emmy Awards from the Academy of Television Arts and Sciences, George Foster Peabody Awards, Cine Golden Eagle Awards, local television awards, and community service awards; and

WHEREAS, WETA has provided valuable public service to its listeners and viewers across the greater Washington metropolitan area for the past 50 years; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commend WETA on the occasion of its 50th anniversary; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to WETA as an expression of the General Assembly's congratulations and appreciation for the station's commitment to producing and broadcasting quality programming that inspires and educates listeners and viewers.

INTRODUCED

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