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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 876

Offered February 12, 2013

Commending the Alice Ferguson Foundation.

Patrons—Surovell; Senators: Ebbin and Puller

WHEREAS, for 25 years, the Alice Ferguson Foundation has spearheaded the Annual Potomac River Watershed Cleanup; and

WHEREAS, the Alice Ferguson Foundation, founded in 1954, works to provide students, teachers, and community members with opportunities to learn more about the environment and agriculture through direct experience; and

WHEREAS, through the Alice Ferguson Foundation education programs, Hard Bargain Farm Environmental Center and Bridging the Watershed, students from around the area experience nature firsthand through hands-on field studies; and

WHEREAS, during the Alice Ferguson Foundation field studies, educators ask students to describe what they see during these outdoor experiences; over the years, students began to frequently make note of the human impact to the natural world, including the trash that washed up on the shoreline and that was left in the national parks; and

WHEREAS, noting this issue, educators began to incorporate cleanups and trash education into Alice Ferguson Foundation educational programs and held the foundation's first Annual Potomac River Watershed Cleanup at Hard Bargain Farm in 1989 to raise the public's awareness of the litter issue; and

WHEREAS, every year after that, the Alice Ferguson Foundation Annual Potomac River Watershed Cleanup grew in size, increasing the number of volunteers and sites and the amount of trash removed from the Potomac River Watershed, which provides 80 percent of area residents' drinking water and supplies about 500 million gallons of fresh drinking water a day; and

WHEREAS, in the past 25 years, the Alice Ferguson Foundation has engaged more than 114,000 volunteers to remove six million pounds of litter from the Potomac River Watershed during the annual cleanup, working with close to 500 partner organizations; and

WHEREAS, the Annual Potomac River Watershed Cleanup is part of the Alice Ferguson Foundation Trash Free Potomac Watershed Initiative, which was established in 2005 and seeks to address the growing problem of trash in the region; and

WHEREAS, the Alice Ferguson Foundation works with local and regional government entities and other interested parties to raise public awareness of trash issues, help citizens change their behavior, institute the infrastructures and policies to create a lasting reduction of litter and waste, and reduce the amount of litter reaching waterways; and

WHEREAS, the Alice Ferguson Foundation Trash Free Potomac Watershed Initiative piloted the Regional Litter Prevention Campaign in five jurisdictions and three communities to educate people about the harmful nature of litter; and

WHEREAS, the Alice Ferguson Foundation holds an annual Trash Summit, a gathering of key stakeholders to educate, dialogue, plan, and take action on strategies that lead to a Trash Free Potomac Watershed; and

WHEREAS, the Alice Ferguson Foundation Trash Summit provides a venue for elected officials, citizens, and youth leadership to collaborate on strategies to eliminate trash from waterways, communities, streets, and public lands; and

WHEREAS, in 2012 the Alice Ferguson Foundation Trash Free Potomac Watershed Initiative created the Trash Free Potomac Network to connect volunteers, organizations, businesses, and governments to address the trash problem in the region; the online database allows users to find and post volunteer opportunities, cleanups, workshops, and other trash related events; and

WHEREAS, the Alice Ferguson Foundation also established a Trash Treaty that has been signed by 161 elected officials and promotes trash-free facilities and schools; and

WHEREAS, in 2012 the Alice Ferguson Foundation Annual Potomac River Watershed Cleanup brought together 14,616 volunteers who removed 256 tons of trash from 660 sites; and

WHEREAS, trash collected by Alice Ferguson Foundation Annual Potomac River Watershed Cleanup volunteers consisted of such items as food containers, paper products, plastic bags, tires, car batteries, construction site debris, and household appliances; and

WHEREAS, Litter Enforcement Month (LEM), also organized by the Alice Ferguson Foundation, runs concurrently with the Annual Potomac River Watershed Cleanup during April; LEM engages local law-enforcement agencies to raise awareness of litter, illegal dumping, and related crimes; the laws associated with them; and their social and environmental effects on communities, the economy, and the

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59 Potomac River; and

60 WHEREAS, the Alice Ferguson Foundation has provided an invaluable community service through
61 its Annual Potomac River Watershed Cleanup for the past 25 years; now, therefore, be it

62 RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly hereby
63 commend the Alice Ferguson Foundation on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the Annual
64 Potomac River Watershed Cleanup; and, be it

65 RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution
66 for presentation to the Alice Ferguson Foundation as an expression of the General Assembly's
67 admiration for the foundation's commitment to protecting a valuable natural resource.