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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 270

Offered February 4, 2014

Commending People, Inc.

Patron—Kilgore

WHEREAS, in 2014, People, Inc., the first community action agency in the Commonwealth and the first rural community action agency in the United States, celebrates 50 years of helping underserved communities; and

WHEREAS, People, Inc., was founded in 1964 by Garland Thayer and Fount Henderson and his wife, Thelma Henderson, who, along with other residents of Hayters Gap in Washington County, wanted to help their neighbors and create a more vibrant and sustainable community; and

WHEREAS, the organization, which was first called the Hayters Gap Community Club, was incorporated on August 11, 1964, by Joseph P. Johnson, Jr., as the Progressive Community Club of Washington County; and

WHEREAS, the enactment of the federal Economic Opportunity Act, signed by President Lyndon B. Johnson on August 20, 1964, established community action agencies as catalysts for efforts to alleviate poverty throughout the United States; and

WHEREAS, due to the efforts of its founders, in December 1964 the Progressive Community Club received its first grant of \$55,000 from the federal Office of Economic Opportunity, becoming the first community action agency in the Commonwealth and the first rural community action agency in the nation; and

WHEREAS, in 1974, the Progressive Community Club became People Incorporated of Washington County and Bristol, Virginia, and in the last 40 years, the agency has steadily expanded its services into underserved areas throughout the Commonwealth; and

WHEREAS, today, residents of 27 counties and cities in Southwest Virginia, the northern Shenandoah Valley, and the northern Piedmont regions of the Commonwealth receive help and services from People, Inc.; the headquarters of the private nonprofit corporation is in Abingdon; and

WHEREAS, programs offered by People, Inc., include early childhood development, health care, affordable housing, education, job training and employment, consumer finance and small business development, and community economic development services; and

WHEREAS, in the last 50 years, People, Inc., has grown from a small community organization into a nationally recognized service agency and is regarded as one of the most innovative and successful community action agencies in the nation; and

WHEREAS, in 2013, People, Inc., offered a range of personal and community services to more than 6,000 individuals and families living in many different communities; the organization's work resulted in economic benefits worth \$88 million to jurisdictions throughout the Commonwealth; and

WHEREAS, the founders of People, Inc., firmly believed that people, no matter their circumstances, have hopes and dreams for themselves and their communities; the organization has stayed true to this core principle as it continues to demonstrate excellence in providing ways for people to realize those hopes and enhance their lives, their families, and their communities; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commend People, Inc., on its 50th anniversary of helping people and families in need throughout the Commonwealth; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to People, Inc., as an expression of the General Assembly's respect and admiration for its steadfast commitment to helping Virginians and their families achieve their dreams.

INTRODUCED

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