

2015 SESSION

INTRODUCED

15104723D

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 916

Offered February 23, 2015

Commending Kwame Alexander.

Patrons—Rust and Plum; Senator: Howell

WHEREAS, acclaimed writer Kwame Alexander of Reston won the prestigious 2015 Newbery Medal for children's literature for *The Crossover*, a book written in verse about twin boys, age 12, who play basketball; and

WHEREAS, the Newbery Medal, named for John Newbery, an 18th-century British bookseller, is considered the highest award in children's literature; it is awarded annually to the author of the most distinguished contribution to American literature for children by the Association for Library Service to Children, a division of the American Library Association; and

WHEREAS, Kwame Alexander is a writer and publisher who has written for the stage and television, recorded a CD, performed around the world, produced jazz and book festivals, hosted a radio show, and taught high school; he is the son of Dr. E. Curtis Alexander and Barbara Alexander of Chesapeake; and

WHEREAS, as the author of 18 books, Kwame Alexander also encourages young people to write; he founded Book-in-a-Day, a program that teaches and empowers teenagers to write; it has produced more than 3,000 student authors from the United States, Canada, and the Caribbean; and

WHEREAS, Kwame Alexander is also the author of *Acoustic Rooster and His Barnyard Band*, about a jazz-loving rooster who wants to win a talent contest, which was an NAACP Image Award nominee; *He Said, She Said*, a book for young adults; and *And Then You Know*, one of several collections of poetry he has written; and

WHEREAS, as an ambassador for writing and literacy, Kwame Alexander has traveled far and wide and has led delegations to Italy, Brazil, and Ghana; he also has visited many schools in the Commonwealth, where his poetry workshops inspire and motivate both students and teachers; and

WHEREAS, Kwame Alexander has been a keynote speaker for the Virginia State Reading Association, featured author at the Virginia Festival of the Book in Charlottesville, writer-in-the-schools at Oscar Smith High School in Chesapeake, poet-in-residence for the Loudoun County Public Library, literacy ambassador for LitWorld, and judge for the Miss Ghana Tourism Project; and

WHEREAS, Kwame Alexander said that the humility and gratitude he felt upon hearing he had won the Newbery Medal was as meaningful as the praise he received from a young person who admitted that despite not liking to read he could not put *The Crossover* down; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commend Kwame Alexander of Reston for winning the prestigious 2015 Newbery Medal for children's literature for *The Crossover*; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to Kwame Alexander as an expression of the General Assembly's congratulations and admiration for his literary talent, contributions to American literature, and enthusiastic efforts to spread a love of poetry, writing, and reading to young people in the Commonwealth and around the world.

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