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SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 349

Offered February 11, 2015

Commending Courtney Paige Garrett.

Patron—Newman

WHEREAS, Courtney Paige Garrett of Pamplin, a graduate student at Liberty University, was crowned Miss Virginia 2014 before an enthusiastic crowd at the Roanoke Civic Center on June 28, 2014; and

WHEREAS, an experienced pageant competitor, Courtney Garrett was named Miss Virginia's Outstanding Teen in 2009 and was crowned Miss State Fair of Virginia in 2014; she has competed in the Miss Virginia pageant for four consecutive years; and

WHEREAS, at the 2014 Miss Virginia pageant, Courtney Garrett displayed her exceptional talents as a singer, performing "Parla Più Piano" from *The Godfather*; a talented singer from a young age, she has performed classical and contemporary music throughout the Commonwealth and the nation, including at Carnegie Hall in New York City; and

WHEREAS, Courtney Garrett as Miss Virginia has traveled throughout the Commonwealth to motivate other young women to become leaders in their communities and promote her platform Defying Disabilities, which was inspired by her experiences with her younger brother, Austin, who has cerebral palsy and autism; and

WHEREAS, a crucial aspect of Courtney Garrett's platform is raising awareness for the importance of sign language; she teaches basic and conversational sign language to help build empathy for and fellowship with people with disabilities by fostering better communication; and

WHEREAS, another aspect of Courtney Garrett's platform is her work to celebrate the perseverance of people with disabilities and promote respect, inclusion, and unity through her support for the Special Olympics; she serves as a volunteer and coach for Area 12 Special Olympics and is a former keynote speaker at the Virginia Special Olympics Summer Games; and

WHEREAS, after completing her education, Courtney Garrett plans to lead a life of service by founding a nonprofit organization to advocate for people with disabilities and provide multiple-disciplinary, inclusive educational programs involving the arts; and

WHEREAS, Miss Virginia Courtney Garrett advanced to the nationally televised Miss America 2015 pageant in September 2014 and was honored to be named first runner-up; and

WHEREAS, possessing an extraordinary combination of beauty, talent, intelligence, compassion, and dedication, Courtney Garrett has ably represented the Commonwealth during her reign as Miss Virginia; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commend Courtney Paige Garrett on her selection as Miss Virginia 2014; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to Courtney Paige Garrett as an expression of the General Assembly's congratulations and admiration for her achievements.

INTRODUCED

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